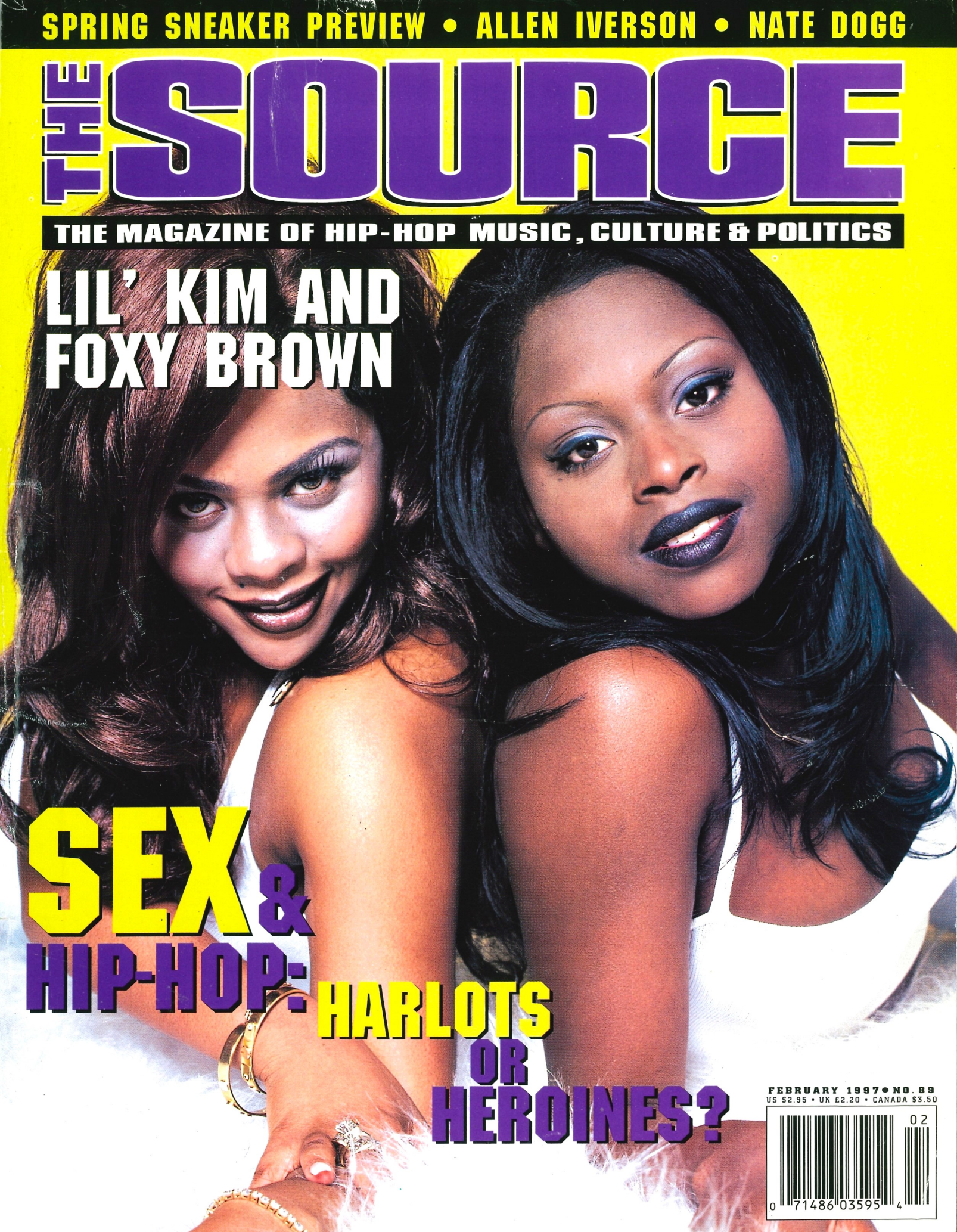
SPRING SNEAKER PREVIEW • ALLEN IVERSON • NATE DOGG

THE SOURCE

THE MAGAZINE OF HIP-HOP MUSIC, CULTURE & POLITICS

LIL' KIM AND FOXY BROWN



SEX & HIP-HOP: HARLOTS OR HEROINES?

FEBRUARY 1997 • NO. 89
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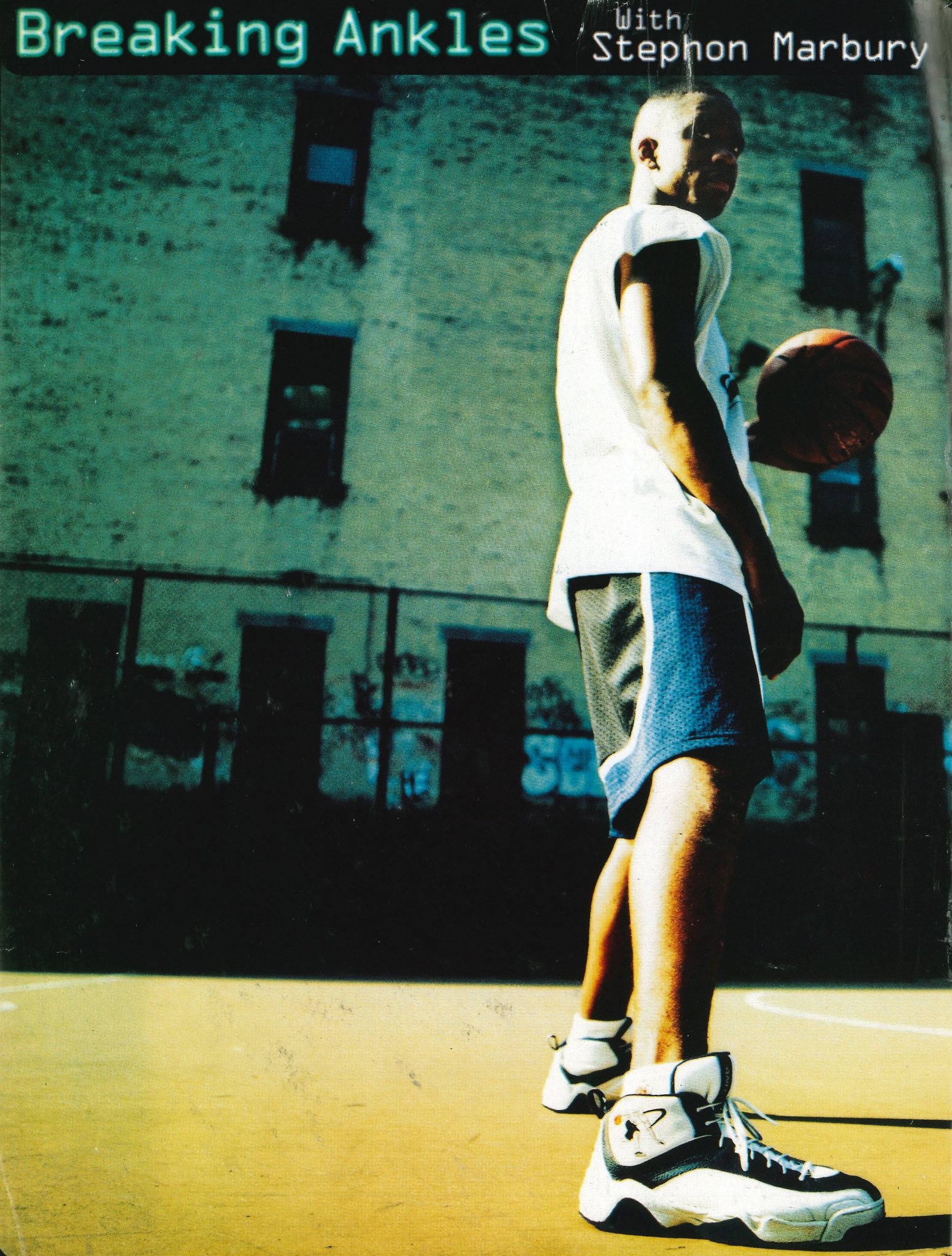
Breaking Ankles

With Stephon Marbury



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-*Romye*
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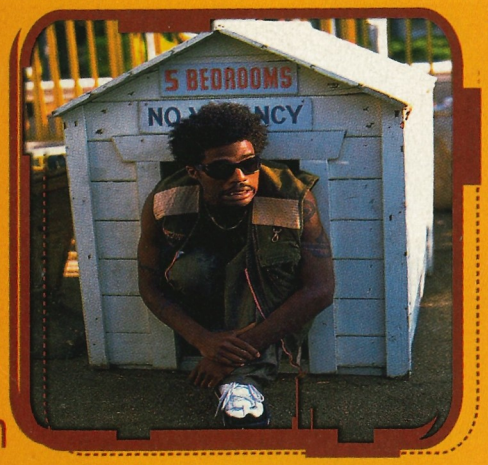

"Hectic times bring out drastic measures.
Understand the balance of problems and pleasures."
-*Imani*
artist "The Pharcyde"

"Eyes are in the spirit."
-*Tre*
artist "The Pharcyde"

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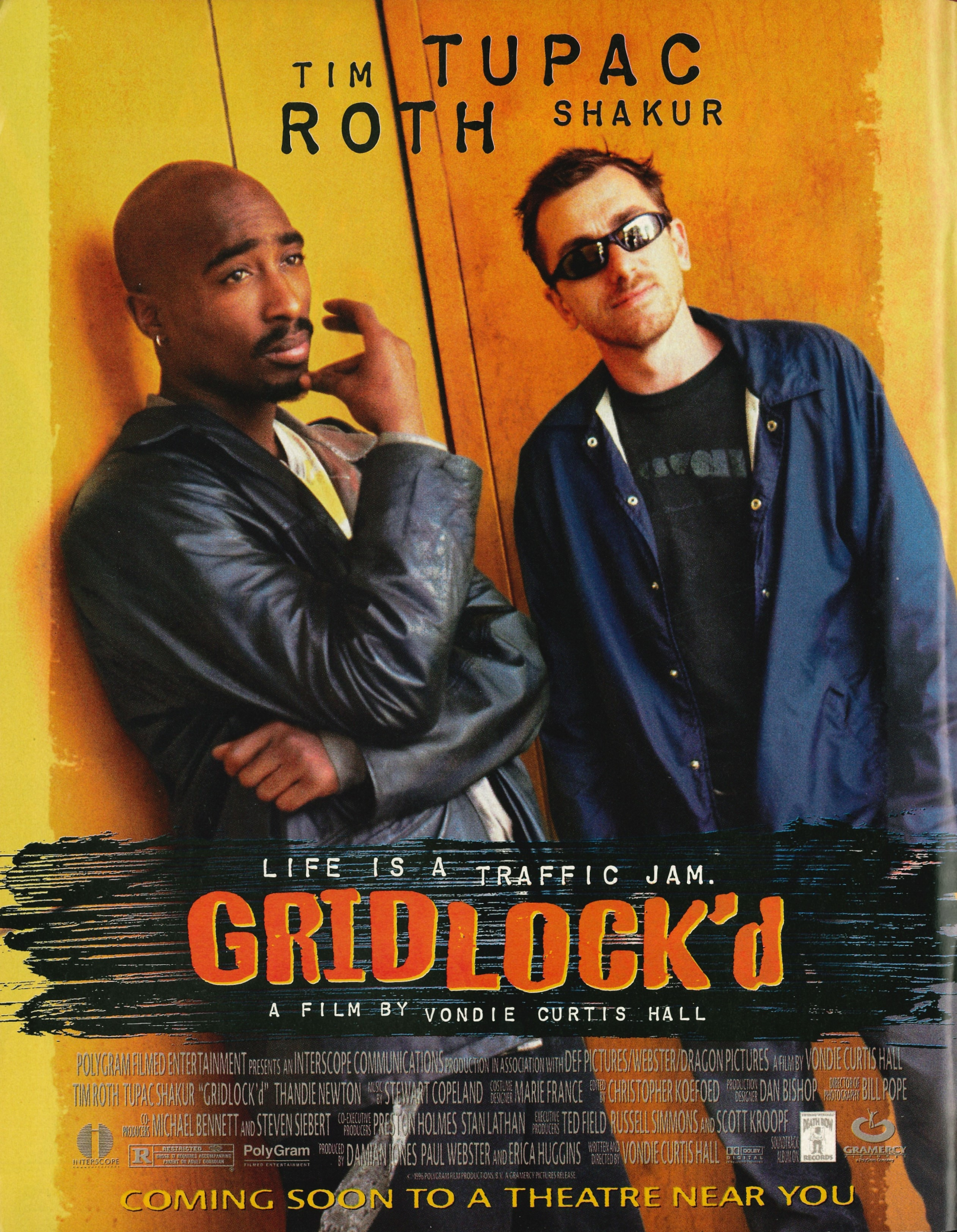
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THE SOURCE

THE MAGAZINE OF HIP-HOP MUSIC, CULTURE & POLITICS

FEBRUARY

FEATURES

45 THE SPRING '97 SNEAKER EXHIBIT

Remember how we couldn't wait for Spring to arrive so we could get up on the latest gear? Well, another Spring will soon be upon us, which means time for all sneaker heads to stock up on the latest athletic footwear. As always, THE SOURCE keeps you up on the newest flavors for the season.

48 BLACK AGENTS & ATHLETES

"Black Ballin'"

Despite being the overwhelming majority in the NBA, Black b-ballers are more often represented by White agents than Black ones. We take you beyond the locker room and into the battlefield of sports negotiations to investigate the reasons behind this unfortunate disparity. *By Scoop Jackson*

54 NATE DOGG

"Teflon Blues"

Death Row's in-house bluesman has finally unveiled his solo debut album after a series of dramatic episodes that almost brought his career to a dead halt. With these experiences providing much of the inspiration for his work, Nate Dogg stands poised to become hip-hop's addition to a legion of American blues legends. *By Donnell Alexander*

59 THE NEW FACE OF SOUL MUSIC

"The Live Five"

Erykah Badu, Jamiroquai, Omar, Tony Toni Toné, Maxwell—you may not associate these names with hip-hop, but you should. THE SOURCE gives light to five acts that remind the hip-hop generation of an era gone by, a time when urban music wasn't all cast from the same mold. *By Adario Strange*

62 FOXY BROWN & LIL' KIM

"Mack Divas"

Amidst the heavy flak they've caught from virtually anyone with a gripe about their public personas, the Ill Na Na and The Queen Bee continue to enjoy the perks that come with successful careers. However, there's a lot more to Foxy Brown and Lil' Kim than meets the eye. Take a glimpse into the lives and minds of hip-hop's current femme fatales. *By Michael A. Gonzales*

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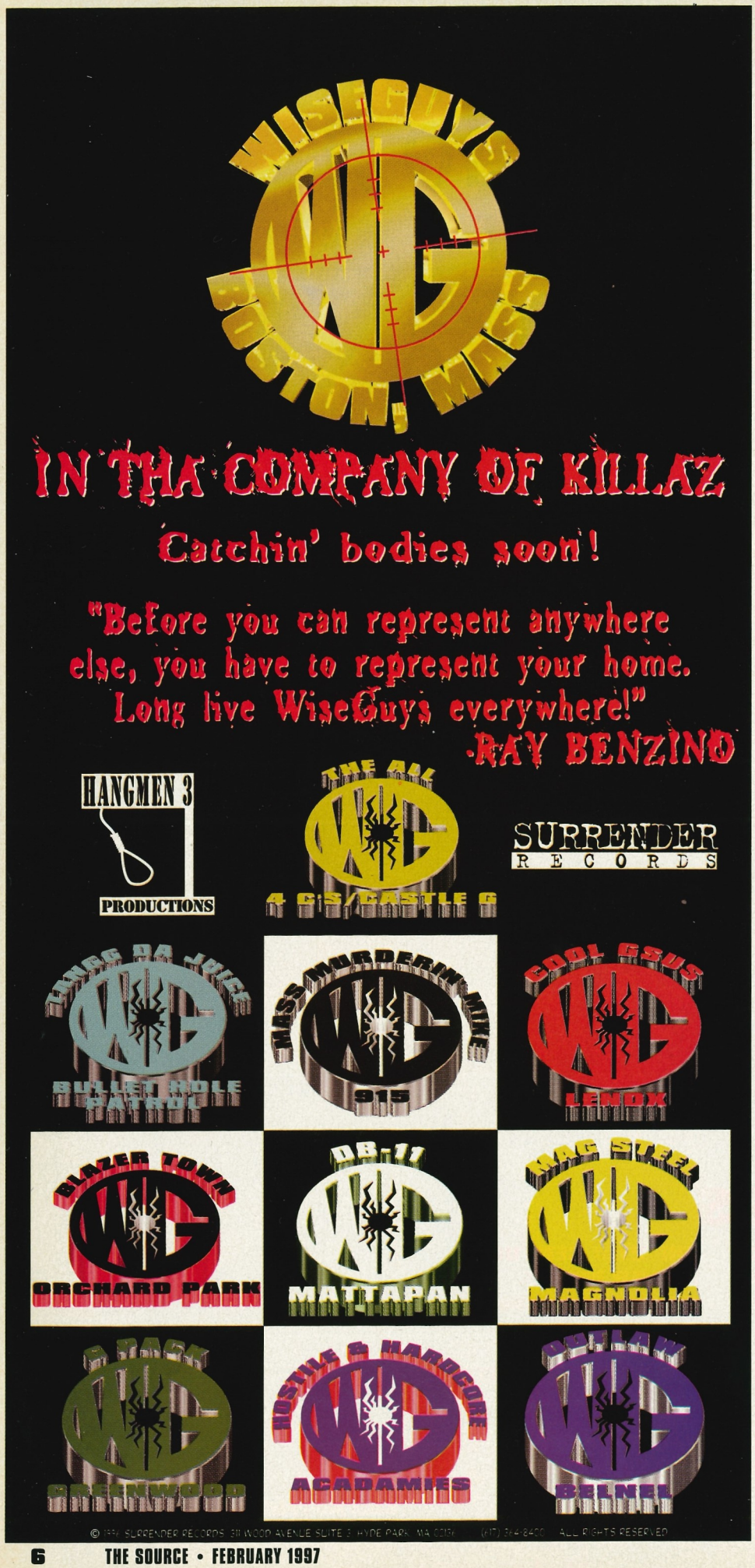
Back with his third LP, *MUDDY WATERS*, is the Brick City Funk Don, Redman

COVER PHOTO OF FOXY BROWN AND LIL' KIM BY JORDAN DONER (KIM'S DRESS BY PACO RABANNE) • THIS PAGE, REDMAN BY DAVID KRIEGER



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We at THE SOURCE take very seriously the challenge of being the only independent voice for the Hip-Hop Nation. We strive hard to bring the reader a complete and unbiased representation of this incredible art form and all that surrounds it. With this in mind, we feel that it is important for our readers to be aware of the nature of our relationships with the rap industry.

We engage in business transactions with companies that are part of the rap music industry on two basic levels. Obviously, we accept advertising from such companies. Secondly, we at times are contracted by record companies to aid in the promotion of their product outside the direct channels of the magazine.

With respect to any of our business relationships, we feel it is our responsibility always to strictly police the integrity of our editorial content. Only in this way can we continue to bring to you the clear and unbiased coverage which we hope has won the respect of all of our readers.

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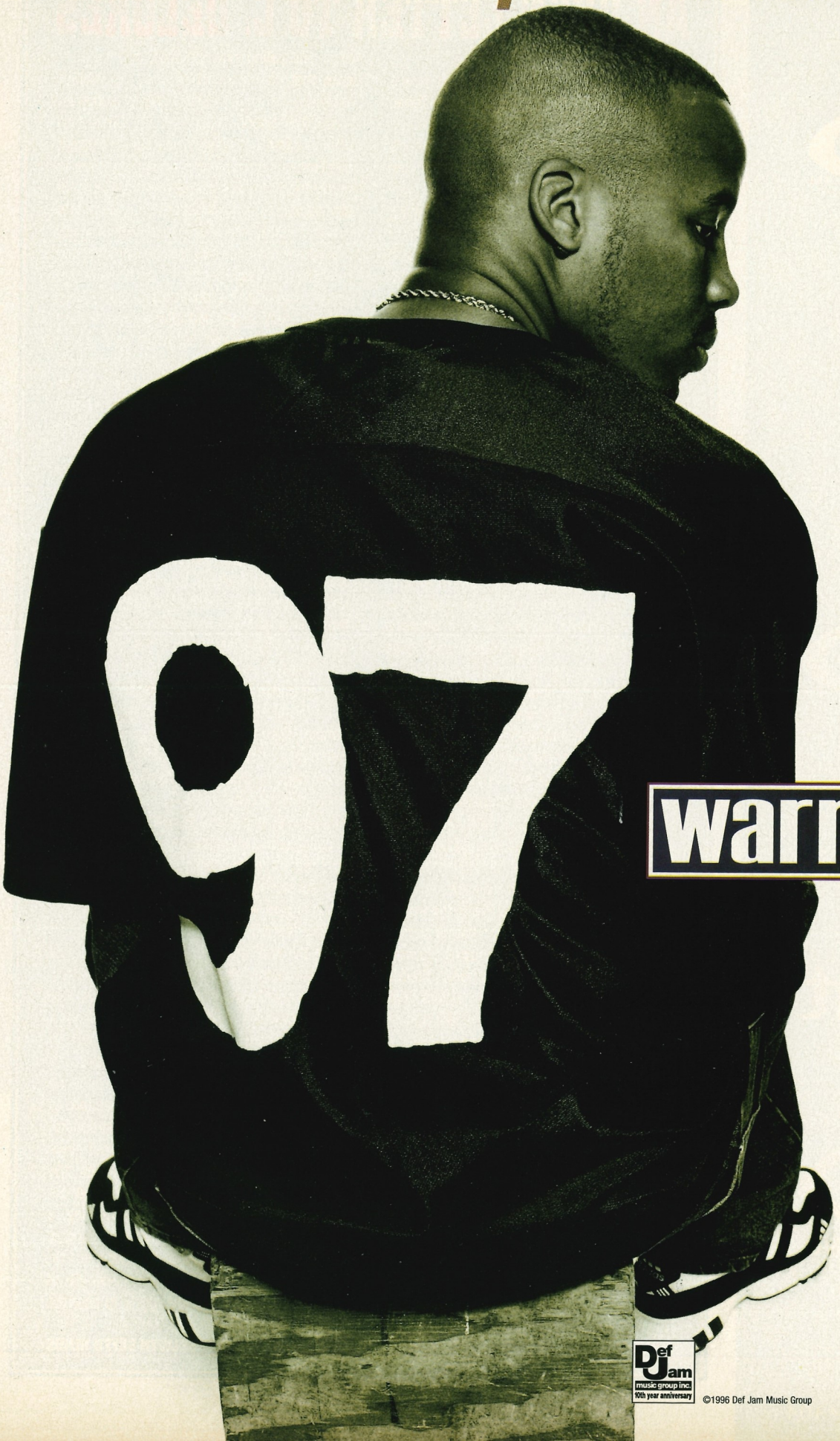

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AN OPEN LETTER TO C. DELORES

Hello Dr. Tucker,

It seems you're at it again. Last year's scarecrows were Snoop Doggy Dogg, Tupac Shakur, Nine Inch Nails, and Interscope Records, then under Time Warner. This year's scarecrows are Snoop Doggy Dogg, Tupac Shakur, Marilyn Manson (occupying the position of token white act I suppose), and...Interscope Records, now under MCA. I don't know if you're aware of this, but pop music, hip-hop, and even the sub-genre of gangsta rap, don't begin and end with Snoop and Tupac. You see, hip-hop is an almost cannibalistic art form. It devours the old and spits out the new faster than almost any other music. Now the crossover success of gangsta rap has given it a longer lease on life in the market, but anyone trotting out the same ole' gangsta rap bogeymen today has not been doing their homework; they don't know that narratives about money and materialism drove much of the market in '96; they have no account for the overwhelming success of acts like the Fugees, Outkast, Bone Thugs, A Tribe Called Quest, Nas, LL Cool J and a host of others; they probably don't even know that the latest albums by their favorite whipping boys, Snoop and Tupac, experienced huge sales drop-offs after big opening weeks.

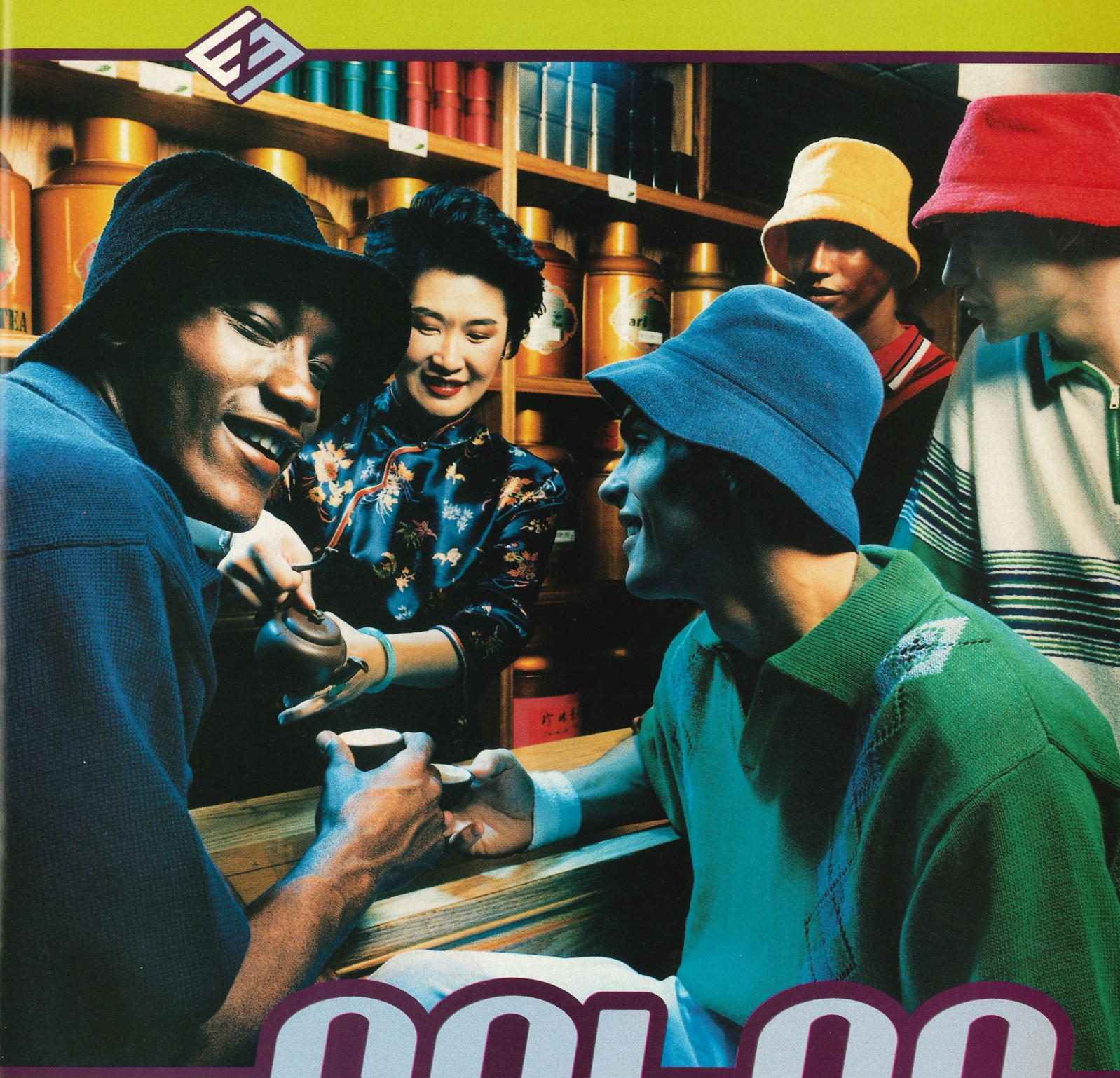
Now let's talk about the three evils, Dr. Tucker, the ones that seem to have you all in a tizzy: violence, profanity and misogyny. But let us have a candid conversation. So why don't we dispose of the dramatic rhetoric, phrases like the "end of civilization" and what-have-you. Shall we start with violence in American pop culture? You see, contemporary artists didn't invent that phenomenon. Our culture reveres figures of violence, real and imagined. We're Americans. We're the world's cowboys. We *want* to see John Wayne gunning down Apaches; US Marines trooping the world carrying out gunboat diplomacy; Freddie Kruger; Al Capone; Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan blasting away Irish terrorists. The fact is, most of us lead relatively boring, ordinary lives, so we're fascinated by these figures. So if you truly want to address the American public's fascination with violent imagery in film, music, and literature, you're going to have to do more than take potshots at easy targets.

What about the influence and effect of violence, you may ask? Now I believe that music, like any other art form, has the power to move people. But I don't believe it clouds folks' minds and causes them to perpetrate acts that they would never otherwise contemplate. As for effect, well hip-hop listeners cover a wide demographic, so I'm only going to address two: the romanticized "core" audience—i.e. mostly Black and Latino inner city kids; and the audience that oftentimes determines big market success—i.e. mostly white, mostly suburban kids. Now Snoop Dogg and Dr. Dre's first albums came out when I was still in college, and I remember being amazed at the degree to which the sons and daughters of America's elite latched onto those artists. Four years later I realize that it has much to do with the way mainstream America has always quantified and celebrated a Black aesthetic, particularly one with an edge. Do I feel comfortable that images of Black pain, anger and oftentimes self-hate are hungrily devoured by white kids everywhere? Of course not. But that's not the conversation you want to have or the point you're making. You seem stuck between drawing a correlation between kids' worship of "ghetto chic" and social mayhem, i.e. low-slung jeans and baseball caps twisted to the side equate to pulling out guns and shooting people. Please. As for kids from the inner city, anyone who imagines that they can't (a) distinguish between narratives put forth on vinyl and their daily realities; and (b) put said narratives into their proper context, is doing those kids an extreme disservice. Indeed, I wonder if you or Mr. Bennet has ever spent any substantive time with the "at-risk" children in whose interest you claim to be acting.

As for misogyny, my reaction to that one is simple. I don't support that type of material. Personally, I don't buy it. Professionally, I encourage my writers to critique it. The difference between you and I is that (a) I fight to educate my peers and generation, not morally condescend when the cameras beckon; and (b) I recognize, and acknowledge, that misogyny is a sickness that has plagued America for all 200 plus years of her existence, not simply the last 10 or so dominated by hip-hop.

In the final analysis, Dr. Tucker, I find you both worrisome and confusing. You have every right to express your beliefs and opinions. But the specter of a private citizen embarking on a massive witchhunt is troubling to me, particularly because of the veil of righteousness with which you cloak yourself. I have little patience for hypocrisy, which is why I don't hesitate to harpoon hip-hop's excesses when appropriate. Perhaps you should confront your own hypocrisy, because if you truly seek the destruction of the demons that plague our communities—AIDS, crime, etc.—putting a gag order on a few rappers is lip service at best. So I question your motivations, Dr. Tucker. And I question your alliances. We of the hip-hop generation are willing to confront our own shortcomings. Are you?

SELWYN SEYFU HINDS



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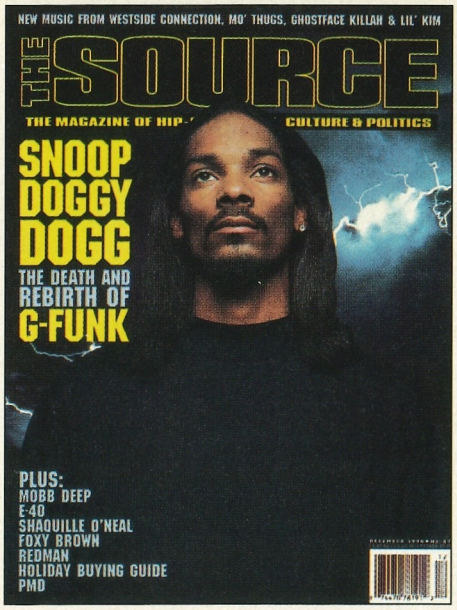

I have two questions that are weighing on my mind. First, where are Foxy Brown's parents? Second, why the hell is this seventeen-year-old chickenhead being given so much attention? Last time I checked, exposing your breasts at every given opportunity and shaking your ass were not prerequisites for becoming an MC. Real female heads like myself are mad frustrated because talented artists like Bahamadia are being overlooked for garbage. Foxy Brown cannot rap and her subject matter is limited, to say the least. She also claims to be an avid reader, but evidently all she's been reading are mail order catalogues and fashion magazines. Last time I checked, Dolce & Gabbana were not the main characters in any literary work. It disgusts me that Foxy Brown could summon up the nerve to call fellow hoochie Lil' Kim's photos less than sophisticated. Isn't this a case of the pot calling the kettle black? My advice to Foxy Brown and her trick counterparts: go back to school. I heard they're offering a course called Self-Respect 101.

FEMI AUSTIN
Ontario, Canada

I can't believe you only gave us that short interview about Foxy Brown. She is an up-and- coming star. What I can't understand is how you could give Lil' Kim 2 1/4 pages about stuff that we could care less about and that stupid crap about being happy that Foxy is kicking the same style as she is. First of all, Foxy is 130% better than Kim. The only thing that Kim has over Foxy is that Kim is a little bit cuter, but Foxy is my girl (even though she didn't give me my shout out).

JOEL AKA QUEST
Long Island, NY

I am writing about your review in the December '96 issue on Lil' Kim. Being a female hip-hop fan, I have learned to ignore the many seemingly uneducated, insecure women who encourage the prevailing attitude that "most women are hoes" in the hip-hop scene. So whatever, Kim raps about sex, men, and how cool she is. However, I was in total dismay when I read in the album review that Lil' Kim "makes a strong attempt at crafting a hip-hop feminist manifesto." Perhaps this was a typo, but I feel that I should point it out, seeing that "THE SOURCE" is such a well respected magazine. Look up the word "feminism" in the dictionary. A woman degrading herself by portraying herself as a sex object contributes to sexism in hip-hop. If Kim considers herself an "advocate who transgresses sexist boundaries," that is yet another sad commentary on American society.

HAYLEY PHILLIPS
Alberta, Canada

I can see why Lil' Kim and Foxy Brown get along so well; they both look like sluts! After reading your article about Lil' Kim, I have even less respect for her. If I were Faith, I would check her, too! She didn't have to mention how often she likes to have sex, and how she gets off on herself. It is so upsetting to see how vulgarity and profanity are saturating the hip-hop world. I give much props to Latifah, Lyte, etc., for paving the way for female rappers. However, acts like Lil' Kim and Foxy Brown turn us back 20 years. They defeat the whole purpose of the struggle female rappers went through to get recognition and respect in the hip-hop world. I hope Lil' Kim grows up and checks herself. More profanity in your lyrics does not make you a better MC.

KENIA COCCO
Oakland, CA

WRATH OF THE RATE

Today I picked up the latest issue of one of my favorite rags, THE SOURCE. After reading some great articles, I get to the record review section and my jaw drops open! I see that Jeru The Damaja's *Wrath of the Math* has only gotten 3 mics. Then my shit drops to the floor faster than the 50 ducks I had on Tyson! Da Brat? On the very next page, Da Brat has 3 1/2 mics. I quickly flash to the cover to make sure I haven't got a copy of *Rolling Stone* or some shit. Now, I'm not going to rip on the cats who did the reviewing—that's their opinion.

There's more: in your November issue, there is an article on Lil' Kim. I had never liked her style —didn't dislike her, but her style just wasn't my thing. After reading this article, I don't like her. "I have on Versace this...and Versace that." I don't care if her Kotex was Versace. This isn't Hip-Hop. I'm 25, so I'm from a bit older school of Hip-Hop than she is. She needs to check back in for some summer classes. They can teach her to rhyme about more innovative topics.

DAN "THE WHITE MAN" G
Chicago, IL

THE SOURCE has hit an all time low this year. Not only have you let a bunch of crabs grace your cover, but in your December issue you went out of your way to try and play out one of the great masters of hip-hop—PMD! True, his first solo joint was not all that, but his new shit, *Business Is Business,* is one of the best records of the year. How could you give PMD—a man who's given over 10 years of his life to hip-hop—2 1/2 mics? Parrish Smith has done with his new record what Erick Sermon has never done on any of his—keep it real! On the inside of your magazine you state that you're dedicated to real hip-hop. That remains to be seen.

BIG YA
New York, NY

What the hell is going on with your reviews department? Have you all lost your hip-hop minds? I can't believe that I'm seeing groups like Da Brat, Richie Rich and Lil' Kim get more mics than Jeru The Damaja. Although intelligence obviously doesn't count for much with your rag, I'd rather hear *Wrath of the Math* over *Anutha Tantrum* any day.

DISGUSTED
Los Angeles, CA

We have been avid readers of your magazine for about 4 years, and have noticed discrepancies and at times even hypocrisy in your publication. But by far the biggest travesty to date are the reviews in the December '96 issue. As headz from Atlanta and New York, respectively, we are very open to different types of hip-hop, from Wu-Tang Clan to Hieroglyphics to Eightball & MJG. In the recent past, you have slept on quite a few emcees, including Jeru the Damaja, and we're pretty sure somebody got a beatdown for that one. But for you to come back years later and repeat the same folly is ridiculous, and serves as evidence that your magazine is in need of a serious overhaul. The fact that media pawns like E-40 and Lil' Kim both received higher ratings than someone with a tight message, production and flow makes no sense to us, and we're sure many others. It's no secret that Ice Cube has fallen way off, and this is coming from a fan that has *all* his solo albums to date. The only reason Westside Connection got 4 1/2 mics is because you fear the backlash from someone who contributed to the forming of West Coast hip-hop; he's openly confronted and challenged music critics, especially those on the East Coast. We're not even going to get into the mics given to Mo' Thugs and Da Brat. The review Warren Coolidge gave Jeru is a contradiction in terms, offering no complaint or minus, but giving him what is openly considered a mediocre rating. Westside's album is called "trite" by Allen Gordon, but is awarded "superior," meaning go to the store and buy it now. A great deal of true headz, East, West and South, believe that this rating was unfair at best, and either a reevaluation, or an in-depth explanation of your rating policy should be given.

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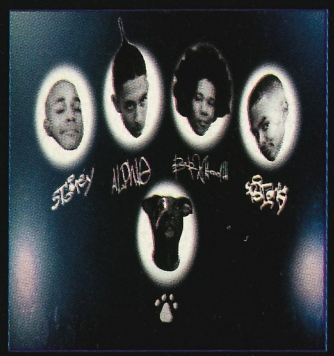

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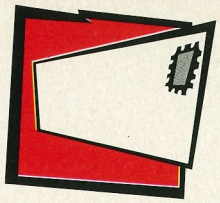


I can't tolerate critics dick-riding West Coast artists any longer! That shit really stresses my mind. At first I thought it was Joe Clair and the "Rap City" crew, but it seems like '96 has been dedicated to giving West Coast artists more than they deserve. How the fuck did the Westside Connection get four and a half mics and Jeru only got three mics? We all know damn well that Jeru carries more lyrical skills than those three stooges. Plus Jeru got Premier backing him up with the beats. He should've gotten four and a half mics and Westside Connection should've gotten three or less. They came with some shit like, "Bowdown to some killers that's greater than you," which is some amateur shit. What's worse is I've seen WC doing the Kid n' Play dance in one of their videos. And since Nas got a four and a half too [*ed. note*: actually, Nas received 4 mic for his latest LP], does that mean you're saying Westside Connection's shit is just as good as Nas' shit? Hell no! Y'all gave Lil' Kim, Keith Murray and Da Brat more props than Jeru, and although Lil' Kim looks good, she ain't nowhere on Jeru's level. What's wrong with y'all? It's like y'all give props to whoever is more popular. Y'all need to let me be a critic in your magazine. I'll set it straight because niggas be scared to tell the truth. Be honest is all I'm asking.

JEAN PAUL
Miramar, FL

HOUSE OF PROPS

I'm not an H.O.P. fan, but I'd say this album is probably their best—production-wise that is. I've got a real problem with Everlast though. Here's why: sure, rap is a Black created and dominated music form, but it still has a lot of white fans (myself included). I think it's safe to say that Everlast is the most prominent white rapper in the industry right now, and that the majority of House of Pain's fans are white. Why then must Everlast insult all of his listeners by saying crap like, "My skin's my cell, I'm doin' time"? He's certainly not impressing anybody, and it makes him look like an idiot. Props to Dan McClure for giving a fair review, though DJ Lethal is underrated and I think he'd do way better someplace else. Everlast, get your head on brother. Otherwise you aren't going to have any fans—white, Black, whatever. What happened to your Irish pride? Oh wait, weren't you Italian at one point, too?

SEAN JORDAN
Halifax, Nova Scotia

PLAYERS' CALL

I've been E-40's biggest fan since he dropped "Mr. Flamboyant" in '89. It seems like no one except the West Coast is tryin' to give us props—until now. One love to THE SOURCE for hookin' a playa with a well-written article. Most cats are quick to knock him because they don't understand his flow. Give him a chance and you will learn how tight he is. After all, THE SOURCE did give E-40 four mics on his latest release! Keep doing your thang E.

CASEY HARGROVE
Upper Marlboro, MD

TAKE 'EM TO SCHOOL

I want to thank Chino and "T" for putting one of my master works in your magazine. I've been a subway artist for over twenty years now, and it kills me to see so-called rap artists dis-associate hip-hop from subway art. And if so, how do you explain Phase 2, Peso 131, Buddy Esquire, and myself? We were making fliers for hip-hop artists long before hip-hop went on records. I feel all young people who deal with these two entertainment factors [rap and graf] should learn more about the history and stop frontin'.

CHAIN 3/TDS CREW
Bronx, NY

E R R A T A

Acknowledgment to senior contributor **TODD WILLIAMS,** who compiled the Holiday Buying Guide for our December '96 issue. The Power Players cover graphic on our January '97 issue was created by **ANTHONY TORIBIO**. PMD's album *Business to Business,* which was reviewed in our December issue, was produced by D.J. Scratch, 8-Off, Solid Scheme, PMD, Hi-Class, and Charlie Marotta.

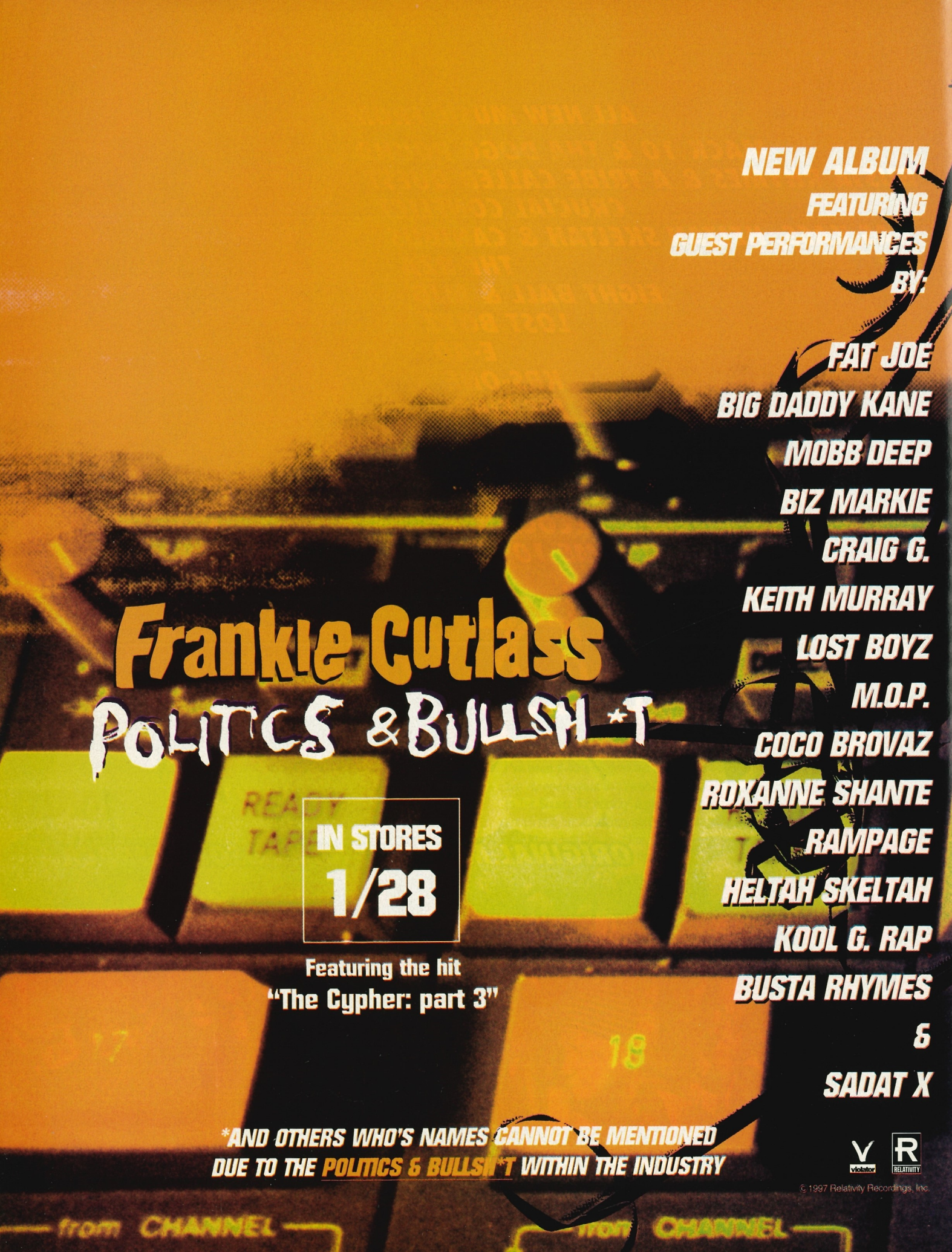
IN STORES JANUARY 14TH

Soundtrack Executive Producers: Andrew Shack and Happy Walters
Soundtrack Co-Executive Producers: Peter Spirer and Chuck Block

PRIORITY RECORDS

BUZZ TONE RECORDS

Buzz Tone Records/Priority Records


NEW ALBUM
FEATURING
GUEST PERFORMANCES
BY:
FAT JOE
BIG DADDY KANE
MOBB DEEP
BIZ MARKIE
CRAIG G.
KEITH MURRAY
LOST BOYZ
M.O.P.
COCO BROVAZ
ROXANNE SHANTE
RAMPAGE
HELTAH SKELTAH
KOOL G. RAP
BUSTA RHYMES
&
SADAT X
Frankie Cutlass
POLITICS & BULLSH*T
IN STORES
1/28
Featuring the hit
"The Cypher: part 3"
*AND OTHERS WHO'S NAMES CANNOT BE MENTIONED
DUE TO THE POLITICS & BULLSH*T WITHIN THE INDUSTRY
violator
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Muddy Waters
Def Jam
101

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Rhyme and Reason Soundtrack
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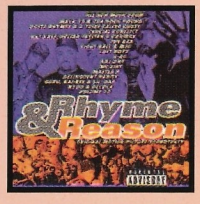

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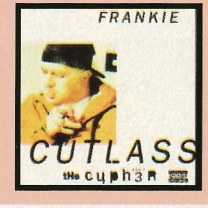

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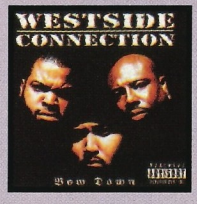

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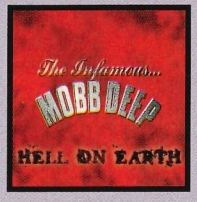

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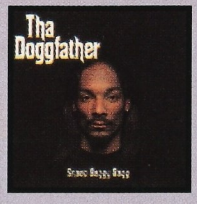

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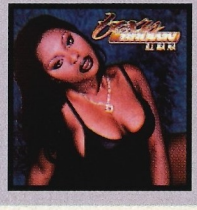

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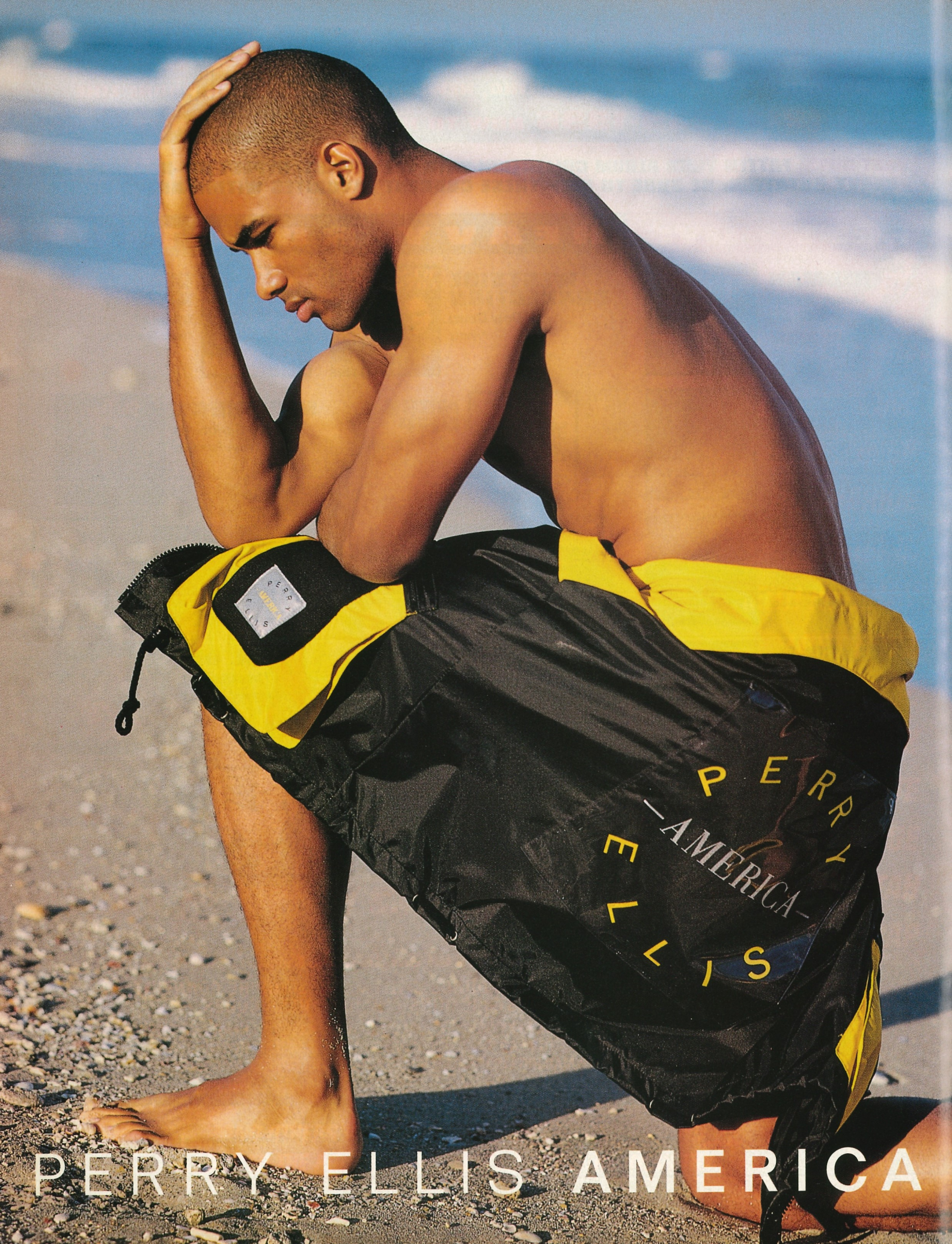
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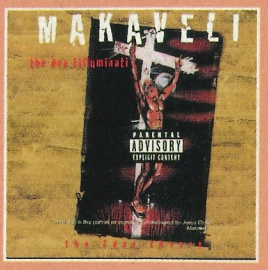
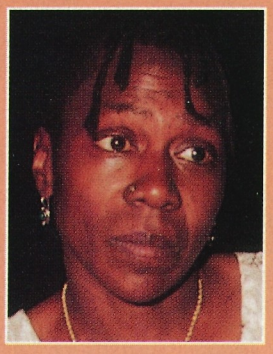
MEDIA WATCH

A Survey of the Mainstream Media's Coverage of Rap Music

POSTHUMOUS PROFITS



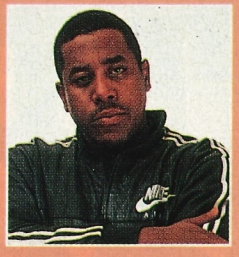
While fantastic rumors and conspiratorial theories swirl through the hip-hop world about **Tupac**'s death, there are a few rock hard facts that are making those connected with Tupac quite rich. In the first week of sales, *The Don Killuminati: The 7 Day Theory*, by the artist formerly known as Tupac and reborn as Makaveli, garnered record sales of 664,000 copies. This total marks the second highest sales of a debut album this year. These kinds of numbers are putting big grins on the faces of executives over at MCA, the media conglomerate that acquired Interscope Records (Death Row's distributor) when Time Warner cowed to political pressure. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, it is because of the success of Interscope that MCA is "emerging as one of the industry's most potent players."



But despite all of Tupac's fancy clothes, cars and carats, much of the profits didn't seem to be funneling into his bank account. According to the *New York Daily News*, at the time of his death, Tupac's estate was worth only about $100,000, along with a Jaguar and a truck. Let's do the math. Even if we all bought *All Eyez on Me* (which sold 566,000 copies in its first week) on discount for $10 a pop, that's still $5,660,000 in sales in the first week! Where's the other $5,560,000? Tupac's mother, **Afeni Shakur**—the sole beneficiary of the estate—wondered the same thing, and after negotiations and investigations, Tupac's estate won a $5 million settlement from Interscope Records. Afeni Shakur says she plans to use some of the money for forty students and children who had been receiving financial assistance from her son. Good to know that in the end, it's not just them that's got who shall have.

'TOONS FROM THE 'HOOD

I might have to start getting up at 7 am on Saturday mornings and flipping my TV to FOX in order to watch the new cartoon called "C-Bear and Jamal." Rapper **Tone Loc** does the voice of C-Bear, a stuffed animal that is the best friend of 11-year-old Jamal (from the name, we know Jamal is a brotha). The production team, including co-executive producer Tone Loc, has come up with a responsible story of a young boy being raised by his widower father and grandparents in South Central Los Angeles. C-Bear goads Jamal into getting into some mischief here and there, and there is a jealous rivalry between C-Bear and the family dog. But subjects that are treated very seriously include school and family. "One of the primary objectives is to foster in the audience a sense of the personal power and responsibility that each kid has," Roland Poindexter, FOX's Children's Television director, told the *Los Angeles Times*. And of course there'll be music. Rap for sure, but classical, blues, bebop and jazz will also set the mood. Move over Scooby Dooby Doo (and Scrappy too), there's a new furry friend in town.



TONE LOC/CHRIS CARROL, AFENI SHAKUR/CAZZIE BURNS

RAP THEORY

Discussions of rap music infrequently make it into the hallowed halls of academia (save for a few hip intellectuals), but at the American Musicological Association's conference in Baltimore, rap music was the topic of the day. According to the *Baltimore Sun*, one presenter argued that rap music represents "the safe commodification of inequality generated by capitalist forms of production." Simply put, if Black poverty can be reduced to a bunch of gun-toting, head rag-wearing gangbangers, then extremely wealthy whites can rest assured that they don't personally have anything to do with the fact that so few control so much of this country's wealth, and that Blacks are absent from the group of privileged few. The entertainment industry has successfully packaged Black hardship and suffering to be appealing. Are we accomplices?

M. PATTILLO

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EAR TO THE STREET

AP/WIDEWORLD

AS RACIAL UNREST SIMMERS IN ST. PETERSBURG, POLICE TURN UP THE HEAT ON AN ACTIVIST GROUP

Almost a year ago to the day of the Million Man March, yet another incident of alleged police brutality turned the streets of St. Petersburg, Florida into a battle zone between residents and police. In a community rocked twice by widespread rioting and looting in October and again in late November, the police shooting of 18-year-old TyRon Mark Lewis served as the catalyst for what would be some $6 million in damages. But while the St. Petersburg riots of 1996, like the 1992 L.A. riots before them, are now history, the conditions that created these rebellions are still with us. Ironically, The Uhuru (Swahili word meaning freedom) Movement, a group of community activists bent on changing those conditions, stands at the center of police investigation into the St. Petersburg crises.

"We will not be shot down in the street like dogs," read one flyer distributed by the group in the aftermath of the first wave of riots that followed the killing of Lewis. "Neither will we be pushed into jails for defending our community...Get organized!"

Days later, the Uhuru group held a mock trial and found St. Petersburg's mayor, its police chief, and Officer James Knight and his partner guilty of murder. They proceeded to sentence them to death by electric chair. Police contend that the Uhuru Movement spearheaded information drives about the grand jury verdict and that such propaganda led groups of youth to action. Following the grand jury ruling that Lewis' death was justifiable homicide, police began arresting several members of Uhuru. "I was furious," city council member Connie Kane said of the police's failure to take action sooner. "Why have we waited so long?"

While few disagree with the chain of events, several religious and community leaders insist that police action initiated the unrest. Police patrolled the neighborhood the day before the grand jury ruling, warning community residents not to attend an Uhuru meeting planned for later that night. Outside Uhuru's headquarters, where protesters were gathering in response to the verdict, police arrested three Uhuru leaders on minor offenses—including an outstanding warrant and expired license plates. "The police gave us five minutes to disperse and said our meeting was an 'unlawful assembly'," said Omali Yeshitela, leader of the Uhuru group. "Minutes later, they began shooting tear gas into the building among women, children and others planning to attend the meeting."

Police insist that the arrests were meant to head off the possibilities of more violence. But within an hour after the grand jury decision, the neighborhood surrounding the Uhuru headquarters erupted. A police officer was shot outside the Uhuru house by random gunfire. Several officers reported being pinned down by gunfire. Another police officer was grazed by a bullet while patrolling the area in a helicopter. According to police, 6 tons of bottles and rocks were stashed in garbage bins and placed strategically throughout the community by the Uhuru Movement.

"No one was killed because the young people pushed the police back," Yeshitela said of the police tear gas attack on over 100 people gathered inside the Black Peoples' Gymnasium, which serves as headquarters of Uhuru. "They displayed courage and were heroic. That's the only reason we didn't have a MOVE type situation here."

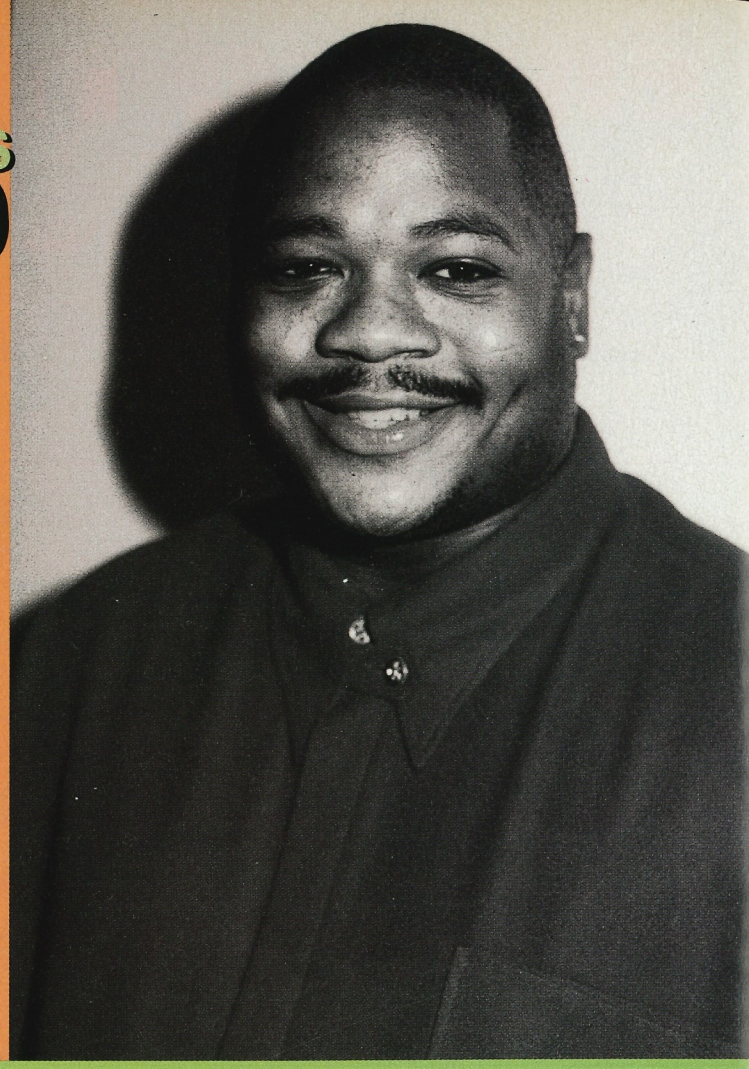
An affiliate of the National People's Democratic Uhuru Movement, the Uhuru Movement believe they are being targeted due to their hardline stance on police brutality. Yeshitela, the 55-year-old National Chairman of the African People's Socialist Party, helped organize the Uhuru movement in St. Petersburg 30 years ago when he was a student organizer for the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). The National People's Democratic Uhuru Movement was formed by Akua Enjeri (the widow of slain Chicago Black Panther leader Fred Hampton).

Lewis was stopped for speeding and allegedly attempted to flee the scene by bumping white police officer Knight, 34, three times with his car. Knight then fired three shots at the windshield, striking Lewis once in the arm and fatally in the chest. Police said Lewis was driving a stolen car, had three outstanding warrants for his arrest, and was carrying six vials of cocaine at the time of the shooting.

About 29 buildings burned the night Knight shot and killed Lewis. More than 150 firefighters from 11 departments were called to 89 fires. Governor Lawton Chiles mobilized the state police and put the local National Guard on standby. On the day the verdict was reached, protests led to at least 30 fires that caused an estimated $1 million in damages, 11 arrests and 8 injured.

Yeshitela maintains that the group did not initiate the second bout of racial violence, and defended the group's right to free speech. "The reality is that the police attempted to take away free speech from people in our movement because they did not like what we said to the community." **STEVE WALKER**

Chicago Mourns Loss of HIP-HOP FIGURE

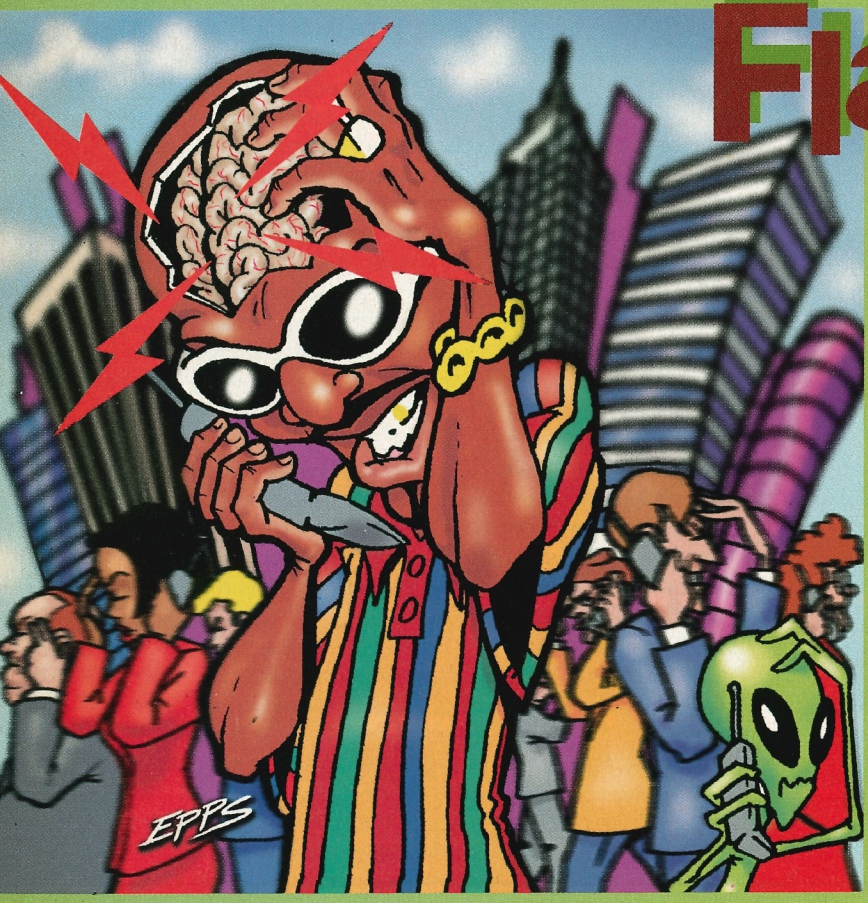


The Hip-Hop Nation recently suffered a great loss with the untimely death of one of its most beloved radio personalities, Chicago's Rapmaster Pinkhouse. Isadore Pink, 31, died from cardiac arrest on Saturday, November 2, 1996. He passed away in his sleep at the University of Chicago Hospital.

Raised on Chicago's south side in the Robert Taylor Homes, Pinkhouse burst onto the Chicago radio hip-hop scene in the late 1980s, when he hosted the "RapHouse" radio show at Kennedy King College. He later worked at WJPC-AM, WGCI, and most recently at 106 JAMZ (WEJM-FM), where he hosted "The Yo Show." Pinkhouse joined 106 JAMZ at its birth in June of 1994, and immediately became a key player responsible for the station's rise as one of the most successful hip-hop stations in the nation.

"Pink had an extensive knowledge of hip-hop, never forgot where he came from, and was not only down for hip-hop, but was down for the community as well," said DJ Tone B. Nimble, Pinkhouse's former DJ partner on "The Yo Show." "Because he had got put on in the industry, he believed it was his duty to help others get put on."

A college scholarship for Chicago youths has been developed in honor of Pinkhouse. He is survived by his mother, eight brothers, one sister, a daughter, Tyresha (12), a son, Isadore Pink, Jr. (5), and thousands of friends, family and relatives. Their lives were all touched by his smile, personality and love for both hip-hop and humanity. He was truly a role model for, and advocate of, a strong and united Hip-Hop Nation. **CAPITAL D**



Flavor in Ya Ear

CELLULAR PHONES COME UNDER HEALTH SCRUTINY

Here is something to think about as you attempt to find just the right spot to receive or make a call from your cellular... As cellular phones and digital technology continue to reach new and exciting realms, including phones with answering machines, caller ID and the like, so does the controversy regarding the possible effects on users.

Recent reports that scientists in Sweden were conducting an epidemiology study of the possible link between hours of cell phone usage and subsequent headaches, struck a nerve with US cell phone users and had the phones ringing off the hook at the Federal Drug Administration (FDA). "The FDA watches for trends and if it warrants a follow-up then one will be conducted," said FDA Spokeswoman Sharon Snider, when asked if users should be concerned.

Some researchers claim that the studies conducted in different countries might not correlate due to the fact that European cellular phones operate at a higher frequency and with almost twice the power of phones in the US.

Several years ago, a Florida man filed a lawsuit which claimed that his wife's brain tumor was caused by the use of a cellular phone. The claim received national media attention and led to numerous studies. Since the lawsuit, the federal government, researchers and industry representatives spearheaded research studies which they claim prove that there is no health hazard associated with cellular phone use. "There is no scientific evidence that cellular phones cause brain cancer," Snider said. **LATONYA KITTLES**

PINKHOUSE/MARTHA BROCK-106 JAMZ; ILLUSTRATION/JOSEPH EPPS

Make Over

A MAJOR CHAPTER IN BLACK HISTORY GOES POP

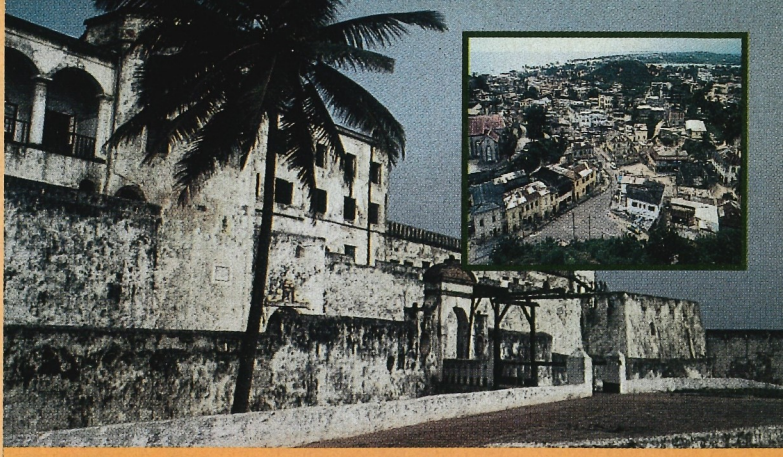
Black History Month often inspires nostalgia for the motherland. And many Africans throughout the Diaspora, in search of their misplaced origins, often turn to Ghana as a starting place; particularly, the castle ruins along the Ghanaian coast that were once used as holding pens for enslaved Africans before boarding transportation vessels.

But that may be changing. Rather than beacons of Black history marking man's inhumanity to man, several of the castles have become vehicles for investments that seem to be contributing more towards whitewashing history than preserving it.

According to Anderson Thompson, professor of African and Middle Eastern Affairs at Northeastern Illinois University, what is happening to the castles is not unprecedented. "The model already exists in former US plantations in South Carolina, Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi. First comes the souvenir shop, then the restaurants, then the plays that are supposed to be re-enactments," said Thompson, who heads annual trips to Ghana, Egypt and Brazil.

Of the 300 full or partial remains of such castles that line Africa's west coast, two were slated by the United Nations for "preservation and restoration." In the 1970s, the castle at Elmina (built by the Swedes in 1653) and the castle at Cape Coast (built by the Portuguese in 1482), joined the list of World Heritage sites. In more recent years, the United States has contributed nearly $10 million toward this effort, and in the last two years the preservation has become a mixture of slavery meets Disney.

These penitentiaries were designed to separate Africans according to gender and house them in separate quarters. Upon leaving the castles to board the ships, they were forced to walk through a narrow pass in single file to prevent uprisings.



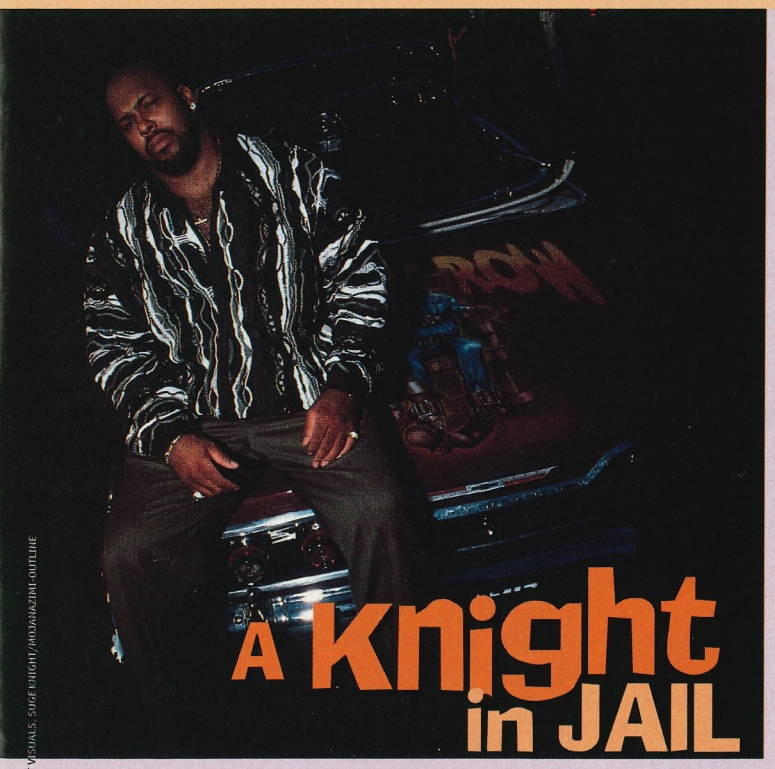
SLAVE HOLDING CENTERS TURNED TOURIST ATTRACTIONS AT ELMINA AND CAPE COAST (INSET), GHANA

Those deemed too rebellious found themselves locked in dungeons devoid of light, food and water. Tens of millions of Africans passed through these gates. Hundreds of thousands died there. "What seems to be happening with the castles is more like what has occurred in Brazil, where this type of thing has reached its most vulgar form," says Thompson. "Now restaurants are open in former slave quarters and the historical sites have become tourist attractions that include night clubs."

Just as with these Western Hemisphere locations, slavery has become big business at Elmina and Cape Coast—both of which came under British control long before Ghana's independence in 1957. Tourists can now dine at expensive restaurants, and several dungeons have been turned into gift shops. Amid minstrel shows about slavery, the true horrors of bondage go unnoticed, and a fresh coat of paint now covers walls which, up until a few years ago, contained markings indicating a buildup from human flesh and excrement.

While Ghanaians protest these efforts, other officials justify them as the only way to pay for restoration and continual upkeep. "Elmina is exposed to salty air and human traffic," said Francine Berkowitz, director of the Smithsonian office of International Relations. "If the castles weren't restored, they would be lost forever."

JOSHUA BLOODWORTH



GHANA/JOHN BUNTING-IMPACT VISUALS, SUGE KNIGHT/MOJAHAZIM-OUTLINE

A knight in JAIL

UNABLE TO DODGE THE SYSTEM, SUGE KNIGHT FACES A POSSIBLE NINE YEARS IN JAIL

Even as they command the top slots on the pop charts, the Death Row Records family can't seem to escape the real-life crime exploits that helped make them famous. Their controversial and much maligned CEO is now being held on probation violation charges and is facing a possible nine-year stay.

The terms of probation had been reached through an agreement with the district attorney's office: 31-year-old Knight had previously plead no contest (February 9, 1995) to two counts of assault involving a 1992 case where he allegedly pistol whipped and then threatened two rappers in a Hollywood recording studio when they used a company phone without his permission. But on November 26, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge J. Stephen Czuleger revoked Knight's probation after ruling that the label chief was an "active participant" in an assault *inside* the MGM Grand Hotel the night Tupac Shakur was shot in Las Vegas.

Knight, who has been jailed since October, was accused of four probation violations, the most serious being his involvement in the assault. Though a slowed-down version of a surveillance tape from the hotel looked fuzzy, Judge Czuleger ruled that the tape, when played at regular speed, showed Knight taking part in the beatdown.

Knight showed little emotion when the ruling came down. Before sentencing, Judge Czuleger said he wanted a thorough report on Knight's background in order to determine appropriate sentencing.

If sentenced to the full nine years, Knight could face at least 4 1/2 mandatory years in jail. Death Row is also reportedly facing a large scale investigation by federal officials about alleged involvements in money laundering, drug trafficking and gang-related activities. Knight in prison will mean massive reorganization at the company.

Despite his reputation for strong-arm tactics, Knight is universally recognized as the business mind that made the company rise from a fledgling dream shared with Dr. Dre to the most profitable label in the rap game. Running the label from jail is not an option for Knight—state regulations prohibit a prisoner from operating a business while in custody.

FRANK WILLIAMS

Proposition 209 Today, What's Next?

THE FUROR SURROUNDING AFFIRMATIVE ACTION CONTINUES

While the nation discovered the dirty little secrets at Texaco, voters in the state of California passed a little secret weapon of their own: Proposition 209. Endorsed by 54 percent of the voting population in the state of California, Proposition 209 will amend the state's constitution to prohibit all forms of state preferences based on race, gender or ethnicity.

Proposition 209, or the California Civil Rights Initiative (CCRI), simply states, "The state shall not discriminate against, or grant preferential treatment to, any individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity or national origin." However, it has the power to institute dramatic change. If implemented, it would limit the number of Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans, Asians and women in public education, civil service staffing and government contracting for the entire state.

"We must make hard work, self-reliance, individual initiative and merit, not group membership, the basis for success in America," said governor Pete Wilson, who agreed with proponents of Proposition 209 that in a state where white males make up only 25% of the population, preferential treatment to minorities should include them. Many supporters of CCRI have argued that Blacks are overrepresented in civil service jobs.

The University of California issued a report last year, predicting that admissions by African-Americans would drop 50%, Latinos by 40%, and Native Americans by 70%, without affirmative action programs in place. "This issue has hit home for people of all colors and both genders throughout colleges in California," says Sabrina Smith, Field Organizer for the UC Student Association. "The number of students of color applying to the UC schools has already dropped. The administration is sending out a message that students of color are not wanted here." Students throughout the UC system have occupied administration buildings in Santa Cruz, Riverside and Berkeley, protested on campus at San Diego, and even blocked Highway 217 in Santa Barbara to resist implementation of Proposition 209.

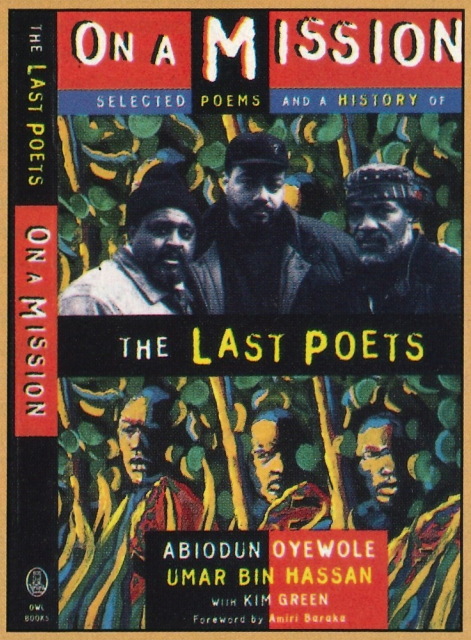
Critics have filed three lawsuits to halt enforcement of Proposition 209, charging that the initiative violates the "equal protection of the law" clause guaranteed to women and minorities under the 14th Amendment. "If Proposition 209, a kind of gender and ethnic cleansing, prevails, then we'll lose basically every civil right we've gained in the last 30 years," said the Reverend Jesse Jackson. "We urge a more activist role by the Justice Department."

LEE COPELAND

book review

Art Ain't Reality

"THE INSIDE STORY OF THE LAST POETS"



The Last Poets have long been acknowledged as pre-cursors to modern-day hip-hop. Their influence is manifested in the samplings of a diverse group of recording artists, from N.W.A to A Tribe Called Quest, and in the rhetoric of artists such as Chuck D and KRS-One. Their apocalyptic vision of the nation's inner-cities foretold the current plight of Black youth and predicted the fall of America. However, listening to their uncompromising lyrics begs the question, what becomes the revolutionary when the revolution doesn't come?

On A Mission: Selected Poems and a History of The Last Poets is a bold attempt to answer this complex question. However, like The Last Poets themselves, the boldness and promise of the book's objective is not brought to fruition. The history of The Last Poets is a complicated one. The original seven members (David Nelson, Gylan Kain, Abiodun Oyewole, Felipe Luciano, Umar Bin Hassan, Jalal Nurridin and Suliaman El Hadi) did not record together as a unit on the group's albums and are locked in a thirty-seven year argument over...you guessed it...rights and royalties. The inability to live up to the meaning(s) of their songs is what eventually killed The Last Poets.

As hip-hop artists threaten the future of our culture by bickering and falling out over the same material things, *On A Mission* should stand as a warning sign and as a road map of how to build in the midst of chaos. The history of The Last Poets is as essential to hip-hop artists as a conversation between a wise father and a rebellious son. However, in our communities, these conversations are too few and far between.

Just as *On A Mission* is on its way to shed light on our collective failure—both the failure of The Last Poets to do right by one another and the failure of the Black community to make the vision of The Last Poets a reality—the book backs off. Refusing to ask revealing questions and provide the reader with substance, the book instead glosses over the personal struggles of Umar Bin Hassan and Abiodun Oyewole, the only two original members who agreed to contribute. *On A Mission* allows its subjects to present the same tired "Uncle Sam did me wrong" critique and rhetoric that has become the calling card of would-be Black revolutionaries. Many questions are left unanswered. For example, early in 1996, Umar was allegedly stabbed in the throat by Jalal Nurridin. The dynamics surrounding this occurrence are fuel for an entire book in and of itself. However, in *On A Mission,* this tragedy is merely mentioned in passing and inexplicably left in the shadows.

On A Mission does succeed in presenting the volatile poetry of Umar Bin Hassan and Abiodun Oyewole. The book is a clever blend of poetry, lyrics from their greatest hits, and social commentary. Each song is accompanied by a personal comment which places the song in an historical context. With a foreword by master poet Amiri Baraka and an introduction by Mercury Records' Kim Green, this section is by far the most interesting and useful in the book.

The Last Poets were prophets and poets of unquestionable skill. They are legends. However, their refusal to tell the truth of their story makes their songs ring hollow and allows Black youth to repeat past mistakes. Those who would be free must begin with themselves. We must ask ourselves difficult questions and produce honest answers that are backed up by actions. If we can't be honest with ourselves, if we can't maintain the energy and unity of a circle of seven, then to speak of revolution just may be a waste of energy, time and some phat lyrics.

CAPITAL D

it's not a concept... IT'S A CULTURE
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ART DIRECTION: MAURICE/DAVID
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N.Y. LOOKS
BASELINE
AVENUE
BAY AREA
DEEP THREADZ
BETTA CLUE
A.J.'S CLOTHING
OXFORD STREET
LAS VEGAS
FUTURE CLOTHING
SEATTLE/TACOMA
NUBIAN FINE COLLECTIBLES
VINCENT'S PRO FASHION
DEE'S SPORTSWEAR
HOUSTON
4 THE SOUL IN U
BADZOOM'S
DALLAS
THE STORE
STREETZ
DREAD-N-IRIE
ATLANTA
PRO-SPORT
GIORGIO'S
HOLLYWOOD
CHICAGO
THE LAIR
BREYER'S
NEW FLAVOR
FRESHWEAR
KREW SPORTSWEAR
DETROIT
BEL-AIR MENSWEAR
STOCKLY SPORTSWEAR
MR. ALLEN'S BOOTERY
CONNECTICUT
XPRESSIONS
JIMMY'S
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CITY BLUES
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PLAYER'S SPORT
SPORT SPOT
TRANSIT
RIGHT MAN
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PHILADELPHIA
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WORD...LIFE

BY SHERRYLL ATKINS

For the Brothers who Are Here

Disaster first masquerades as the cool best friend that says living on the edge is the only way to keep it real. It then evolves into the most jealous of lovers, demanding the complete devotion of all time and energy. Life unravels into a series of adrenaline filled problems and close calls. Finally, the whirlwind romance screeches to a halt when disaster demands what it swore it never would: your life.

If enough 40s were poured on the concrete for the brothers who ain't here, the world would be afloat, Noah's Ark style, in malt liquor. Those who didn't drown in the poisonous liquid would be too blasted to notice that we can no longer say "dat nigga was shot down in the street like a dog." When is the last time a dog has been mercilessly gunned down in the street? Should such an incident occur, the humane society would converge upon the crime scene like the CIA, FBI and Secret Service combined. The culprit would be quickly apprehended, made an example of, and people would think twice about the consequences before they committed dog-acide.

Unfortunately, we don't value ourselves as much as we do our house pets or even strays. Brothers get killed every day over small talk and macho posturing. So surely the world isn't coming to an end because Tupac traded in himself to become one of a million tragedies? Yet as his face glares and stares from the covers of magazines commenting on his demise, my heart is a combo of sickness and anger for the absolute disregard for lives that no one on this earth can claim to have given. The memorial service was canceled due to violence. We have reached a point where one could be killed at a funeral and a mother, afraid that her son's body would be stolen and/or desecrated, has it cremated immediately. The moody, defiant, tortured eyes of Tupac have disintegrated into the same dust that could be erased with a rag and Pledge. He'll not smile again, watch TV, check the charts to see how his song is doing, or call his moms to say hello.

All have expounded on Tupac's self-propelling race to the finish line of his life. None admit to having been on the sideline of his mad dash, egging him on. He was refreshed with water in the form of 40s, gin and juice. Screams of encouragement echoed in his head in the form of album sales and interviews where he spouted arsenic-laced rhetoric to a youth-based, easily-influenced audience. Who could know that we would be the ones left holding the broken tape at his finale, as he fell through, exhausted and bloody?

Instead of walking through the valley of the shadow of death, Pac and several like him (Eazy, Stretch, Seagram Miller) have become shadows themselves. All this about Tupac being in a better place is said only to make *us* feel better. No one knows exactly where Tupac is out there, but he was in a good place right here on this earth where he should be right now. The man was healthier than most who live quiet lives: not one side effect from his lifestyle of blunts, booze and women who might have been carrying a variety pack of diseases; and looking like it was just a myth that his body had more bullet wounds than several soldiers who didn't live to tell the tale. But now Tupac is no more. He's dead. Finished.

There is a rhyme that will stay poised in the air forever, waiting to be heard, but unable to break the sound barrier, for its speaker has spoke his last. I cry for a man I never knew because of the many I did know and the many I will never know. For my brothers who are still here, there is no future in living to fight and fighting to live. Without you, there is no future for me at all. S

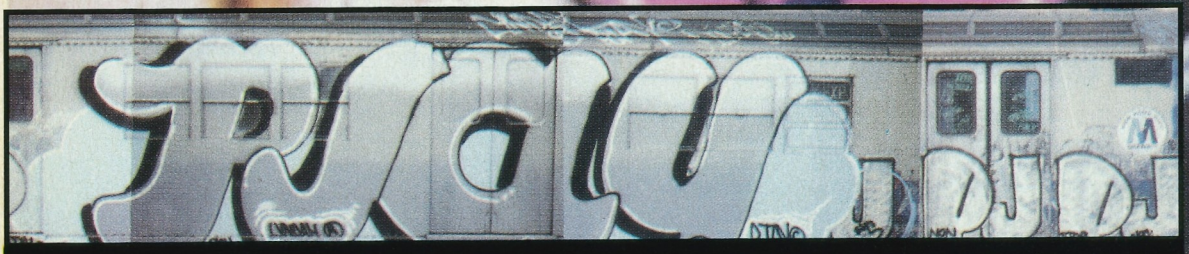
TEXT BY
CHINO/BYI

"UNITED ARTISTS" SEEN & SIR[161] (BY "PJAY") OF DA' BRONX, WINDOW DOWN WHOLE CAR ON THE #4 LINE, 1981

THE INFAMOUS BACK IN THE HOUSE ONCE AGAIN: "SEEN" & "PJAY," #4 LINE, 1980

SCRIPT STYLE: "SEEN ONE" & "FAME" (A PJAY ALIAS), #6 TRAIN, 1980

NEXT STOP, "SATANS PALACE": A HALLOWEEN WHOLE CAR BY "PJAY" ON THE #6 LINE, 1981



FROM THE BOTTOM TO THE TOP, "PJAY" NON STOP, T TO B #5 LINE, 1981

ATTENTION ALL GRAF HEADS

You got some fat flix? Send only top-quality photos to the address below. Write all pertinent info on the back of each photo. Photos cannot be returned, but you will receive credit if we choose to run it here.

CHINO C/O
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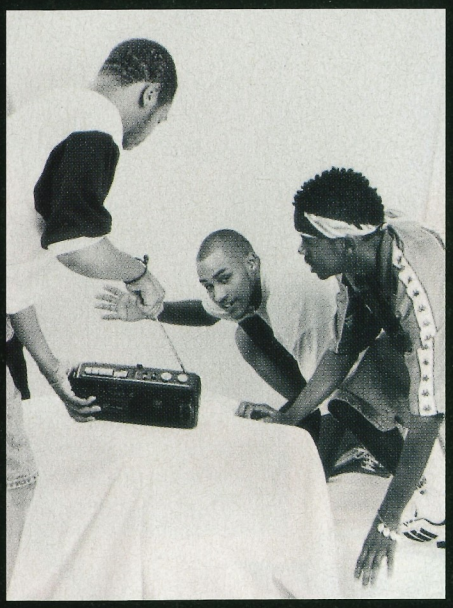
THE BOYS ARE BACK: "MAD" (BY SEEN) & "PJAY," TOP TO BOTTOM WHOLE CAR #5 TRAIN, 1979



SMASH TASK

It's been a long while since we've heard any product from the nation's capitol, Washington, DC. Actually, Nonchalant was that area's last entrant in the rap game. But lo and behold, smack upside the head comes "Smash Task," a 3-man combo that might shed a new light on the unofficial 'DC sound'.

This 3-man alliance possesses a much needed tool in hip-hop: mass appeal. With their three distinctive styles on the mic, they'll get more than their share of it. Dirty Dirt, one of 3 rappers in the trio, can naturally flow over Dollar Bill's on beat/off beat production. His production style displays a hardcore feel with a (not so annoying) dash of R&B, yet is capable of satisfying even the stiffest of heads. The humorous styling and whining of singer/rapper Pookie Cappuccino also helps Smash Task establish a unique style that they can undoubtedly call their own. Check rapper/producer/ singer Dollar Bill on "Tell Me": "...my conclusion/ to this confusion/ is that Blacks come together as one and stop shooting/ shell casings lie/ souls die/ lord knows I try/ my boy killroy died/ so do the strong survive?/ hey, I'm looking for a better way/ I use the green stinky stuff and demisec for a getaway/ I'm mentally gone, but gotta come back/ and face the facts/ take my position in this spot that hell has left me at."

One can predict good things for Smash Task, especially if they stick to their non-traditional form of hip-hop (peep the guitar solo on song #3 for evidence). Catch 'em if you want 'em.

RIGOBERTO "RIGGS" MORALES

Each month in this column, we profile a talented group or artist who has yet to sign a deal. Send top quality demo tapes with a description of the contents, a black-and-white photo and contact info to:

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FOXY BROWN
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"RHYME FOR REASON"
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TOMMY BOY

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CHUBB ROCK W/KRS 1
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PHARCYDE W/RAGHIB ISMAIL
GRIDIRON

"IN THE LONG RUN"
MOBB DEEP
LOUD

"BLACKBERRY"
SNOOP W/DOGG POUND & LBC CREW
DEATH ROW

"CASE CLOSED"
REDMAN
DEF JAM

"NO LOVE LOST"
SHAQ W/LORD TARIQ & JAY Z
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"HIP-HOP QUOTABLE"

Yo, suck my di*k out of animosity
The velocity will fly that head
And freeze ya camps like pottery
To give lobotomies
To all you rap colonies
And shut ya million dollar investment
To economy, and possibly
Might be the one in black leather
Name tag sayin "caution when wet by the track wetter"
The hash spreader
I love the grimy sh*t, even my girl did grimy sh*t to me
And I went back with her
Three years for carrying a loaded handgun
But it's forever when a ni*ga (chic, chic, sploooooow!)
And he lands one to ya cranium
That red dot on ya forehead
Is not 'cause you Arabian
(Watch what you say to him)
You get caught up in a tight situation
I should start erasin' ya whole organization
For makin', wack tunes while my whole platoon
Rock the basement, you couldn't come close
If I gave you my booking agent, or producer
Royalty points, 12 shot loaded luger
Even the crowd to get you suped up
Ya still wack, I peel caps on the regular
Destroy MC's etc., move like the predator
F*ck you, ya label moms and your editor
Give you two to the jugular
Blood be spreadin' all on my shirt
The king of the flirt sh*ttin'
B*tches hittin' me off more than New Edition
(Tweet, tweet, tweet, tweet!!!)
I make them pigs heart skip a beat from
The steel physique
So Iron lung, get on the mic and break em
Off a little summin', summin'

REDMAN, from "Do What You Feel," off the *MUDDY WATERS* album

Newton's Law

FOR EVERY ACTION THANDIE NEWTON MAKES, AN EQUALLY AUDACIOUS REACTION TAKES PLACE

By Todd Williams

When a young, English dance student injured her back, she convalesced by auditioning for "Flirting," a lyrical tale about an adolescent crush. Audiences were dazzled by the object of the little boy's desire—the teenage Thandie Newton, a startling vision of poise and grace. But a personal dilemma was thereby created: dance or drama? The latter won out.

Long-limbed, model-worthy and possessed with pounds of charm, this 23-year-old is perhaps the single most impressive young Black dramatic actress to come along since Dorothy Dandridge and Ruby Dee. Unlike her Hollywood competitors, whose debuts included crackheads, welfare mothers and hoochies, Newton's roles combine a powerful, yet understated sexuality that's belied by an astute intellect. She received her B.A. in Anthropology (a degree she says "makes perfect sense because it's the study of people and political institutions from all over the world") from the prestigious Cambridge University. Indeed, the hallmark of her burgeoning career is the ease with which she plays against type, or in the case of Black actresses, playing against stereotype: "In England, being Black is not an issue when you're in the arts. Here if the role calls for a woman, then you could be white, Black or Pakistani."

Whether heroine or victim, Newton's performances are compelling. Whether in British character studies largely unseen in this country (*Flirting, The Journey of August King*) or epic international period pieces (*Jefferson In Paris, Interview With A Vampire*), Newton effortlessly plumbs a range of emotions.

In the much-anticipated Tupac vehicle, *Gridlock* (Jan. 31), Newton plays a performance artist left in a coma. In a series of flashbacks, she displays a Sade-esque vocal timbre and a masterful feel for the spoken word.

On working with Tupac she says, "There were times where he was trying to figure out where I was coming from because our backgrounds were totally different." Though separated by an ocean of cultural differences, the two took similar paths to the big screen. Both attended artsy high schools, both began as dancers, and both secretly longed to stretch their vocal chords. Tupac of course minted a platinum career, and Newton makes the case for herself in *Gridlock*. "Every performer dreams of singing and I was fortunate enough to have spent time with a great musician like Pac."

And so it goes for the trans-Atlantic bombshell—lots of work and good fortune. "I made five films while I was in school," she says with a chocolate rich British accent. "And I just bought a flat!" However, living in London can have its drawbacks. When Tupac was shot, Newton was virtually cut off. "I've never felt so far away from a place before," she recalls. "I was here, and the press barely covered it." Later, after her worst fear was confirmed, the loss took on a greater significance. "He had the most vitality and energy of anyone I'd ever met. He will be missed ...whether we know or not!"

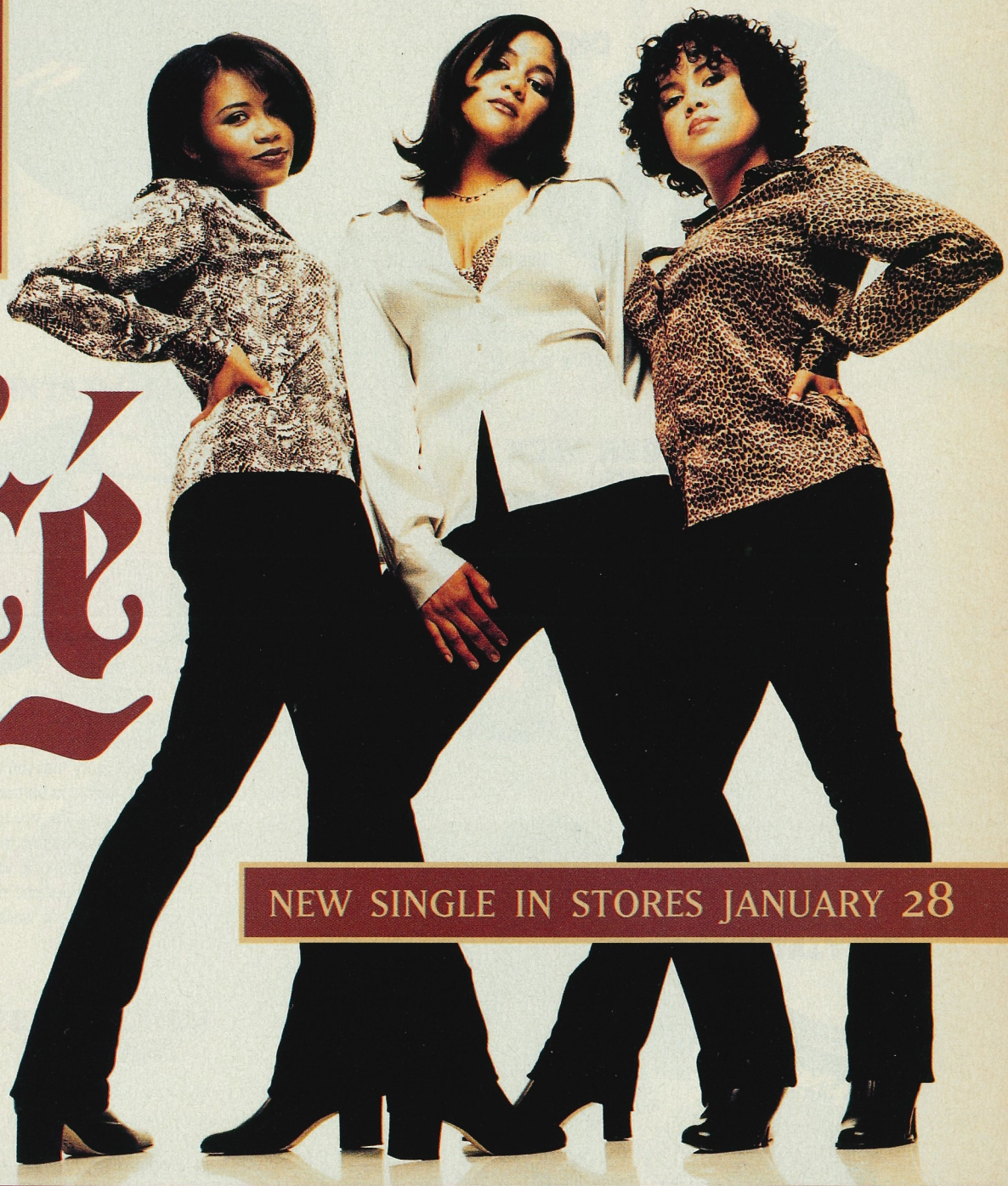
Coming Attractions

The Golden Child, **Eddie Murphy**, is hot. Can he keep it up? Cop comedy *Metro* (Jan. 17) puts him on familiar ground as a detective on a mission...In a galaxy far, far, far away ...yeah, yeah, you know the rest of **George Lucas**' mythical prologue. Though *Star Wars*' special effects pale in comparison to today's flawless, computer-rendered illusions, Lucas' characters, dialogue and storyline remain unmatched. Digitally re-mastered, *Star Wars* hits your galaxy Jan. 31. Feel the force once more!

Mo Thugs Family Scriptures

and the saga continues~~~

THE SOURCE—[4 MIKES]
"MO THUGS FAMILY SCRIPTURES IS A TESTAMENT TO THE LEVEL OF GROWTH THAT BOTH LAYZIE BONE & KRAYZIE BONE HAVE EXPERIENCED AS ARTISTS IN THEIR SHORT LIVES IN THE RECORDING INDUSTRY. THEY REPRESENT THE MINORITY OF ARTISTS WHO REALLY HAVE A GRASP ON WHAT IT TAKES TO COMPOSE A GREAT ALBUM. THUG ON, BROTHERS!"



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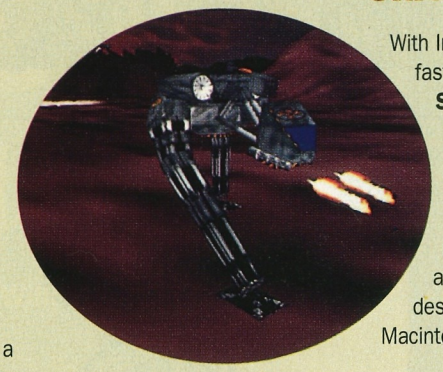
Flavors of the Month

GAME OF THE MONTH- "SHATTERED STEEL"



With Interplay Production's newest fast-action battle game, **"Shattered Steel"** ($49.95; 714-553-6655), players choose from an arsenal of the most technologically advanced weapons as they defend three planets from more than 50 deadly robotic alien forces. This game is designed for both PC CD-ROM and Macintosh computer systems.

CHICO & THE MAN

New from ENYCE (pronounced E-KNEE-CHE) comes the Chico jacket, dipped in a bright, spring aqua blue, white, with just a dash of black for emphasis. This jacket is fully equipped with velcro flaps for inner ventilation and two hidden pockets on the back for stashing water bottles and assorted essentials. A must have to get that spring fling in action.

PROTECT YOUR NECK (AND EARS)

Protect your ears on those cold winter days with this fleece and nylon ear muff cap by Ruuff ($29.00; 213-629-2764). This hat comes in a wide variety of colors and can be worn in the rain.

ALL WEATHER ACCESSORIES

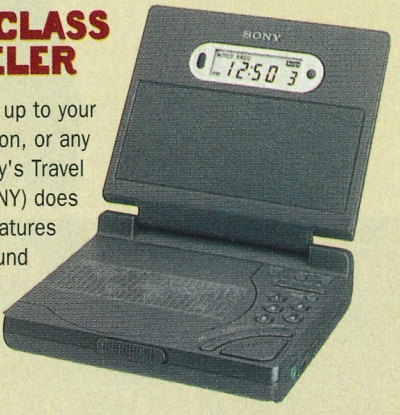
Accessories are sometimes the key to organization and Timberland (available at better retail stores) has every accessory that you could possibly think of to keep you on track. This stylish organizer will allow you to keep track of all your appointments and telephone numbers, and with the notebook, you can take notes at all your important meetings. Other accessories include wallet and key chain.

ANIMAL INSTINCT

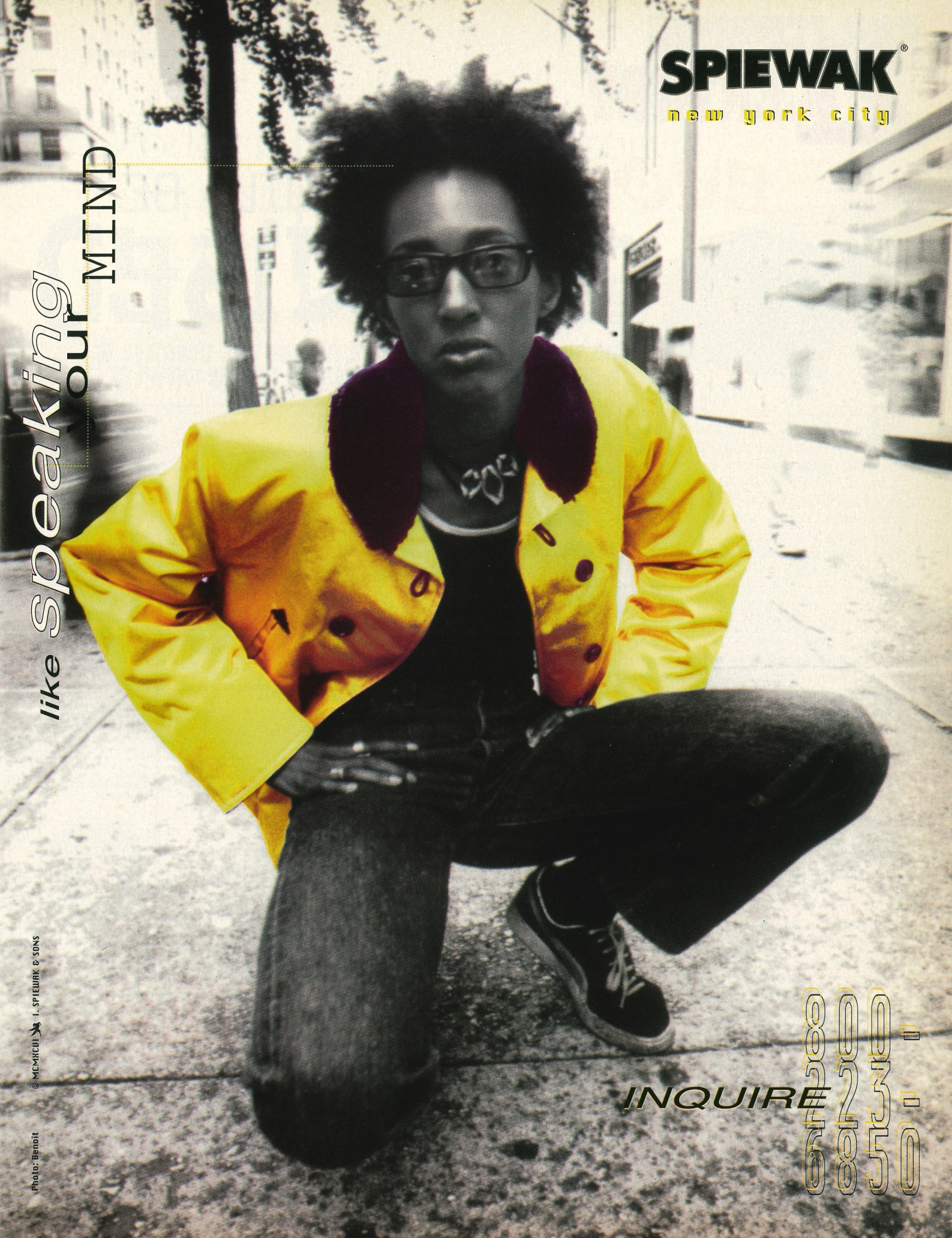
Take a trip on the wild side with an animal print bathrobe and boxers by Joe Boxer ($90, robe; $14, boxers; 212-354-2727). Designed for Big Willies and Big Willmas, this item should keep you warm on those long winter nights.

WORLD CLASS TRAVELER

Start your day by waking up to your favorite news or music station, or any track on your favorite CD. Sony's Travel CD Clock Radio (800-848-SONY) does this and a lot more. Other features include: Mega Bass sound system, world and local time button, 5 random memory presets, and low battery indicator.



CHICO JACKET/RICHARD MITCHELL, ALL OTHERS BY CARL POSEY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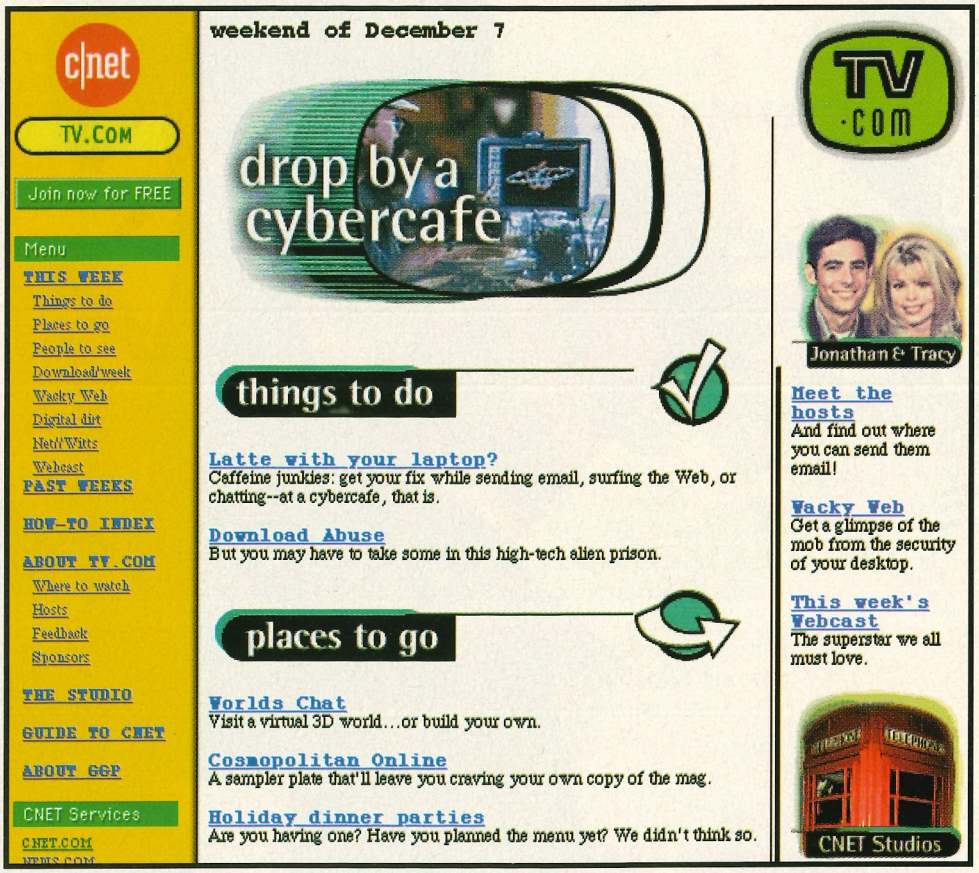
DOC STRANGE AT THE 21 CENTURY

THE EVOLUTION WILL BE TELEVISED

THE INTERNET IS COMING TO A TV NEAR YOU, COURTESY OF A NEW BREED OF SET-TOP BOXES LIKE THE ONE SHOWN AT LEFT

Hey there, son, whatcha doin'? Nothing much pop, just watching TV on my computer. Ha, ha...ok, son, you kill me with those little gadgets of yours. The first thing that happened when the World Wide Web got a foothold on the television biz was a flurry from major network executives who scoffed, nay, fell over laughing, at the prospect that Web-based, real-time entertainment might usurp conventional television's role as the center of entertainment in America. If you haven't studied Media History 101, perhaps you should be made aware that this is the same thing that happened when the first commercial televisions were offered to a radio-saturated America. Similarly, when color TV and cable were first offered, they both received huge shrugs of skepticism by many so-called media experts. So much for the experts. So it should be clear by now that if the world wide web is dabbling with TV, it may not be such a small, net nerd thing. Video conferencing over the net, once thought to be a pasttime of net geeks, has already flourished and entered into the regular schedule of a significant portion of corporate America, allowing executives to speak to their counterparts in Japan with ease.



The concept of Web-based television is simple...deliver live or pre-recorded events and shows in a digitized format through a URL on the world wide web. Many naysayers are still arguing that the connection speeds of the internet are still too slow to make web-based programming viable, yet even as we speak, new streaming technology as well as other modes of connection, such as satellite and cable line access, are being advanced. The bottom line: bandwidth constraints are being attacked on every front, so it may only be a couple of years before live television becomes ubiquitous throughout the internet community.

Recognizing a new burgeoning market when they see one, WebTV has introduced a new TV set top box for about $350.00. Similar in design to a cable box (no accident there), the box allows users to access all the content on the world wide web directly from their television. No computer or fancy hook-ups. The move is a smart one because as bandwidth constraints diminish, the desire for one of these set top boxes will no doubt increase.

One great resource for information on this increasingly interesting phenomenon is a site called TV.com (www.tv.com), also our 21st Century Website of the Month. An offering of C/Net, one of the internet's biggest players, TV.com is unique in that is has a televised sister show which airs on television affiliates around the country. Done in a hip, the-web-is-simple-so-don't-be-scared format, TV.com is perfect for first time web surfers who don't have a clue. At the same time, the show doesn't dumb down so much that it alienates its web-savvy viewers.

Realistically, true real-time television is only currently available if you can afford the expensive technology to make it happen; but affordable configurations of this dynamic entertainment option are rapidly approaching. So please don't act like you're a cave man looking at fire for the first time when you go to your friend's house and see the web on his TV. Remember, we told you so.

ADARIO STRANGE

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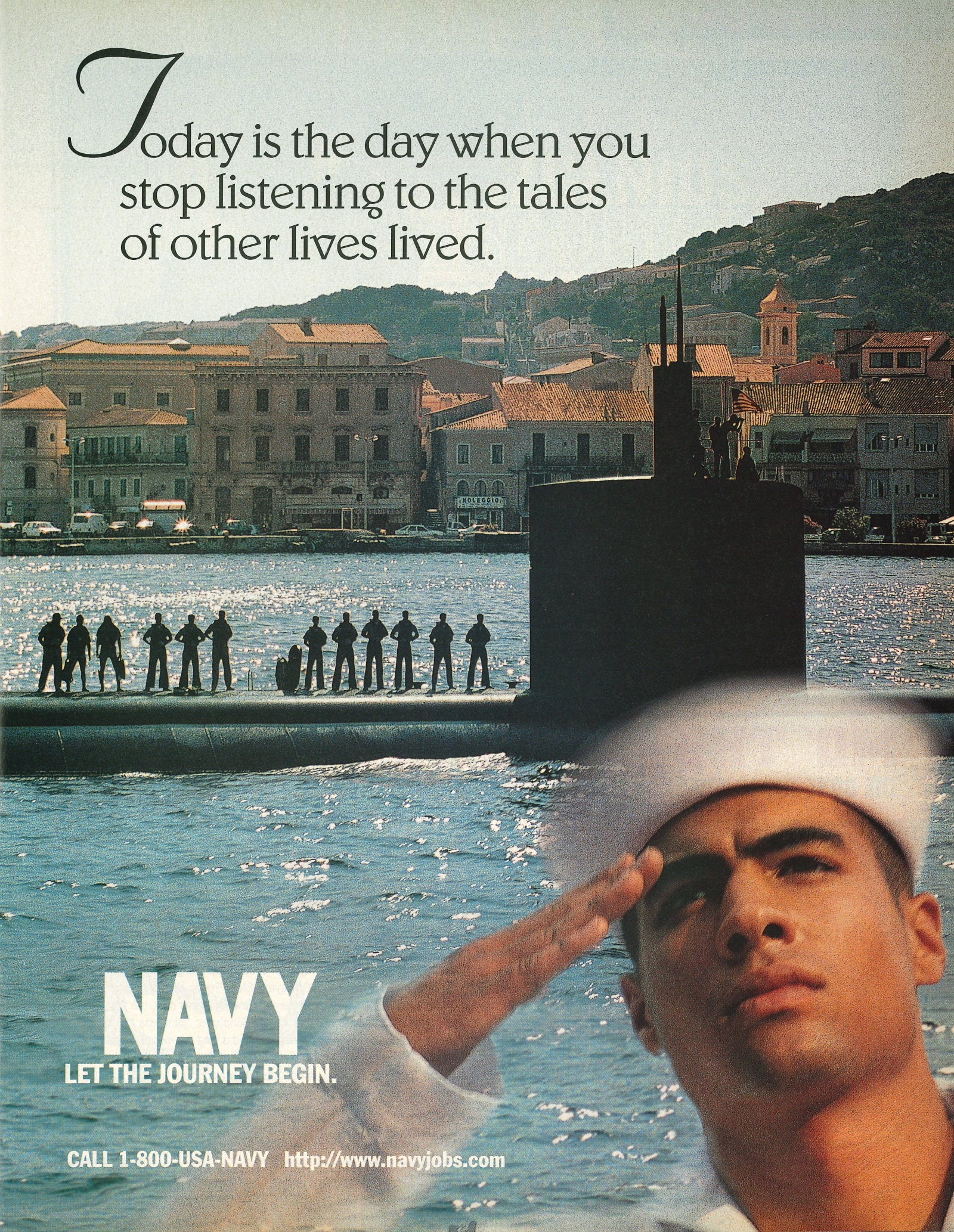
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MO' THUGS RECORDS

THE BONE THUGS-N-HARMONY FAMILY ENTER THE REALM OF LABEL OWNERSHIP WITH THE RELEASE OF "MO THUGS FAMILY SCRIPTURES"

In 1994, a crew of brothers from Cleveland took the Hip-Hop Nation by storm with the release of their debut single, "Thuggish Ruggish Bone." Two years and millions of albums later, the crew, Layzie-Bone, Krayzie-Bone, Wish-Bone and Bizzy-Bone, now have their own label entitled Mo Thugs Records and a stable of MCs to help maintain the stranglehold Bone Thugs-N-Harmony have on the rap game.

As has been chronicled on numerous occasions, with the guiding force of the late Eric "Eazy-E" Wright behind them, Bone hit hip-hoppers over the head like a three-pound fully loaded when they first debuted. What may not be as well known is the knowledge, regarding longevity in the hip-hop game that Wright passed on. Having created his own niche with N.W.A, Wright schooled his pupils on the importance of staying on top of the business part of show business. Sal Licata, President of Relativity Records (responsible for artist development for the Mo Thugs label), sums up the group's relationship with Wright saying, "Eazy-E recognized that the group was unique from the get-go." He also gives props to the evolution of Bone by adding, "Bone's talent for creating new styles has been proven through their own signature sound. We have no doubt we'll see the same kind of creativity and trend-setting in music and style through the family of artists on Mo Thugs Records." Chiming in on the same vibe, Layzie Bone states, "Mo Thugs is the next step to building the Bone empire, and Ruthless (the label Bone Thugs-N-Harmony record on) and Relativity have proven they can take us where we need to go. We've worked side by side and our relationship is tight and productive."

The first album released on the Mo Thugs label is titled *Mo Thugs Family Scriptures*, featuring Bone and peeps who they came up with. "The talent has always been there," says Krayzie Bone, who, along with Archie Blain, produced most of the sixteen tracks on the debut release. "Everybody on this album basically grew up with us, went to school, ran the streets, whatever. It's all family." Included in this family are Tre (the sistas who open up the "Crossroads" single and video), Ken Dawg, Graveyard Shift, Poetic Hustla'z, and Souljah Boy, to name a few. In stores now, the first release off the *Family Scriptures* joint was the single "Thug Devotion," and during the month of November, only Bone's "Days of Our Livez" from the *Set It Off* soundtrack received more radio airplay. Combined with solo releases by the Thug family (including Flesh-n-Bone's current hit album on Mo Thugs/Def Jam Records) and a new release from Bone, these Cleveland MCs are going to have hip-hop on lock down in '97.

ADARIO STRANGE

CHRISTIAN LANTRY

MUGGS PRESENTS

RZA & GZA/GENIUS
WYCLEF from REFUGEE CAMP
DR. DRE and B REAL
MOBB DEEP
KRS-ONE
MC EIHT
CYPRESS HILL
CALL O' DA WILD
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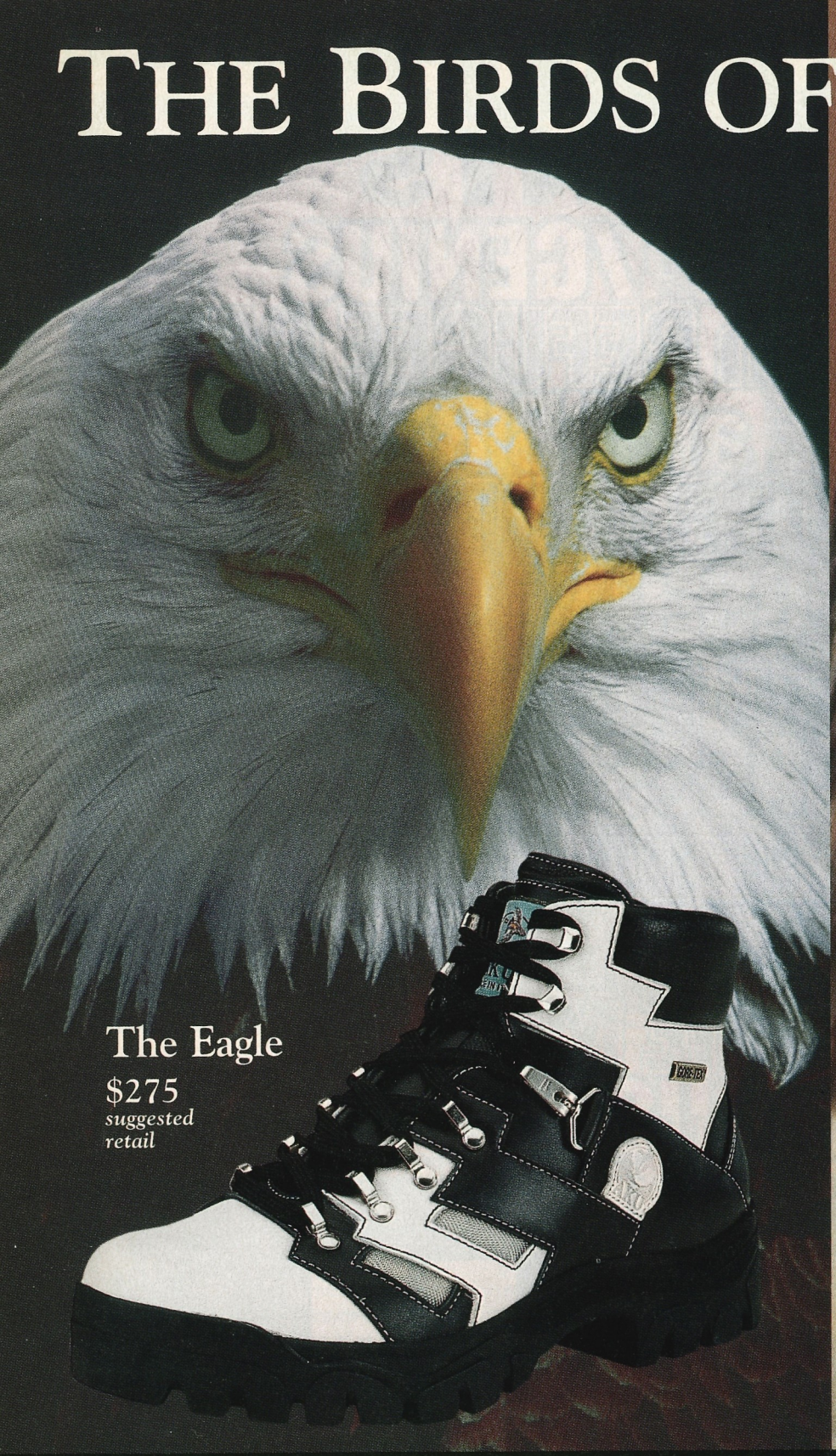

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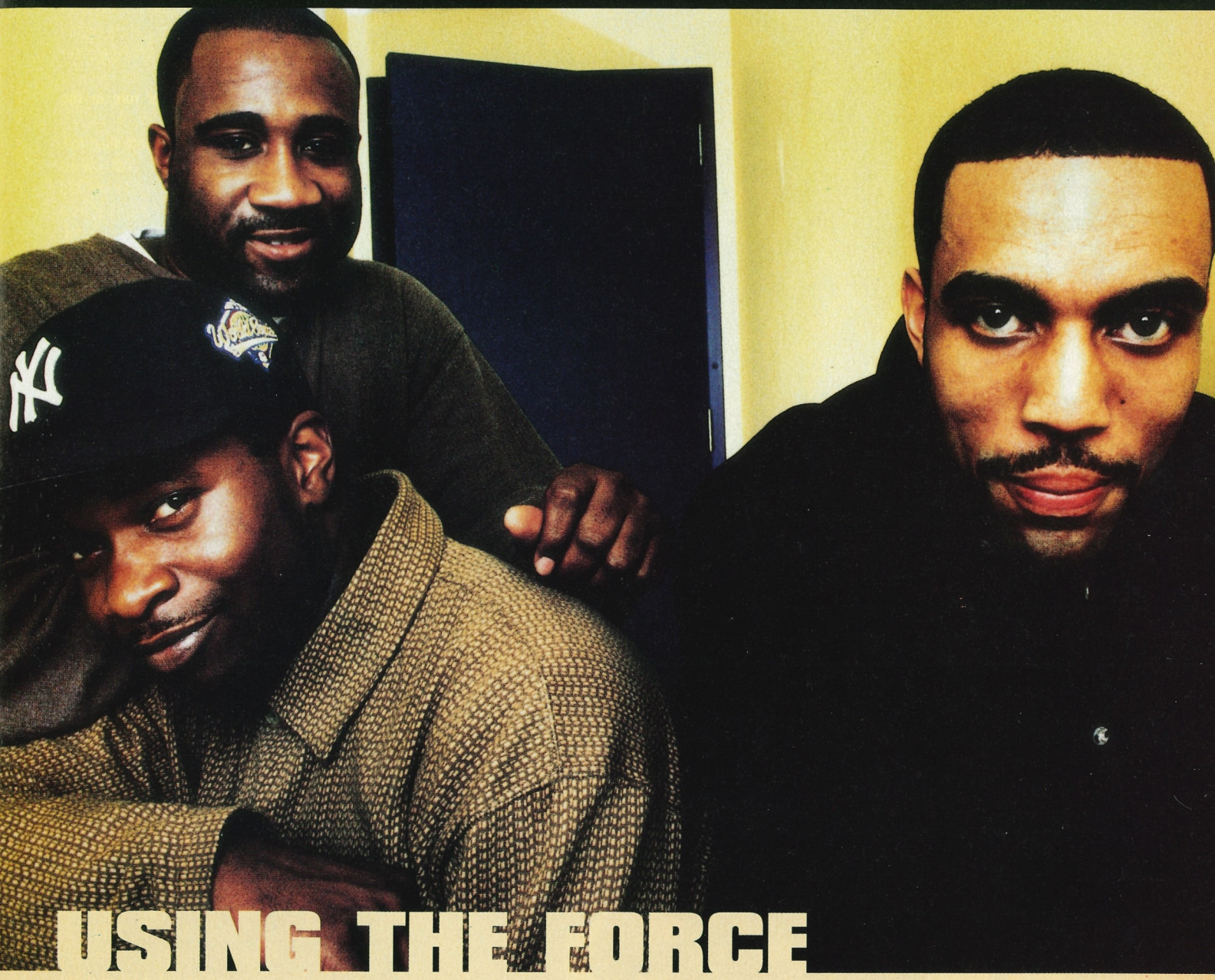

USING THE FORCE

JUNGLE BROTHERS

During the height of hip-hop's conscious era, a trio of young men dubbed the Jungle Brothers came on the scene in full hip-hop nationalist regalia. Sporting safari gear, dreads, and beads with African medallions, Mike G., Sammy B. and Afrika were embraced by the Hip-Hop Nation because they kicked positive messages through their music and had fun doing it. Their first album remains classic material for any hip-hop fan, and was an obvious blueprint to those aspiring MC wannabes.

At the peak of their success in the late eighties and early nineties, the JB's rolled with De La Soul, A Tribe Called Quest and other members of their hip-hop fam to form the Native Tongue posse. This collective of skilled, Afro-centric MCs on a fun-loving vibe exemplified many of hip-hop's original values. It was too good to last, and after two more albums, the JB's were off the scene.

In '97 they are back, not necessarily with a vengeance, but definitely with a new outlook on the business dealings that make the hip-hop world go round.

THE SOURCE: What is going to be the flava for the latest album?

AFRIKA: Back to the basics. Straight up beats, straight up rhymes.

What caused the three-year hiatus?

AFRIKA: Family became more of a priority. If you don't have a plan, and your career is not managed properly, you can make more money on the streets, plain and simple.

But considering you were signed to Warner Bros., wouldn't the crew be straight financially?

AFRIKA: Ask Warner Bros.! They're a 50-year-old company trying to market hip-hop. They weren't prepared. A company like that could get prepared over night but it will never happen. We were artists, we had our vision, and we explained to them what that was and what we wanted then, but then there was the business side. The artist doesn't get heard.

With all the BS, was your motivation to make music tested?

SAMMY B: When you deal with all the bullshit, it's like I could go out here and get a city job and make $30,000 and live happily. Why deal with this

CONTINUED ON PAGE 92

MARTYN GALLINA JONES

NEW JACK THING

TELA

Every house needs a strong foundation. Houston's Suave House Records' foundation is the dynamic Memphis duo Eightball & MJG. The pillars were South Circle (including Mr. Mike's solo offering) and Crime Boss. Now it's time for 25-year-old Memphis native Tela to take off where his M-Town companions left off: moving major product.

Though much of the controversy, and thereby attention, has been focused on the East and West coasts, the Suave House family is showing and proving that their Gulf Coast operation is a viable force in the hip-hop industry. Tela's debut, *Piece Of Mind*, strays from what fans may expect from a Houston act. Although several cuts are reminiscent of the work put down by Suave's Smoke One Productions, Tela and partner Slice T handled most of the production on the LP and have supplied a unique blend of styles and musical approaches. *Piece Of Mind* is a different album. Then again, isn't hip-hop supposed to challenge our ears as well as our minds?

THE SOURCE: What is your role in the Suave House family?

TELA: I guess it's how everybody else roll. What we're trying to do here, and how we put it down, it's like a configuration. It's organized thoughts coming together as a unit but acting in individual behaviors. That's how we try to put it down here. That's to be as one unit, but to be as strong as you can be as a character, to go out there and handle your business. Really, that's where we're all in the House. We add our strengths and then we take strengths from each other and go out here and put it down, basically.

How would you say the Memphis rap scene has changed since Eightball & MJG went national?

None. None at all. Memphis' rap scene basically is still the same. They stuck true to what they was doin' there. You would think it would flip toward the style of Ball and G since they made it nationwide and blew up the spot, but naw, it hasn't. Memphis has its own little style.

What would you say typifies the Memphis mentality or the Memphis rhyme flow?

It's more of a 'hood type of thing. If that's all that they're seeing, that's all they know. If you're coming up in the Black Haven, the Mound, South Memphis, the Gardens, whatever, that's all you see. So basically they rhyme about whatever their environment is. And that's usually ghetto lifestyle. Straight street 'hood representing, talking about their homies and how they came up and the lifestyle they're living.

On the album you've got a lot of different styles and flavors, more than just rhyming. How and why did you go about incorporating them?

It came from my upbringing. I was raised on O'Jays, Marvin Gaye, Isaac Hayes, P-Funk, the list goes on and on. Michael Jackson, the disco era, I was a part of that. From coming up in the mid '70s to the late '90s, you are exposed to the changes of music over time. And I absorbed all types of music. I'm not biased to nobody's music just because you're from this side or you're this color or what have you. If it's good, I'm a bang it. I've been exposed to all types of music, so when I sit down to do something, I think it shows, it comes

CONTINUED ON PAGE 92

RELATIVITY

YAY AREA PLAYA

B-LEGIT

Dig, if you will, the picture. The place: city streets somewhere in the Bay Area. The time: a '70s summer evening. A 1974, burnt orange Cadillac Eldorado with a cocaine-white rag top seeps out of the sunset on a dying sunbeam. It slowly comes to a halt on the town's strip, causing a number of young, voluptuous women to run to the window to converse with the silhouette of an unknown figure with a large-brimmed hat tilted to the side. He mumbles something and they frantically scatter at a miraculous speed back into the nothingness. An observer, dressed much like the figure in the car, approaches and says, "Goldy, how you keep yo' game so tight?" The object of the address caresses the brim of his hat and responds, "Pretty Tony, pimpin' is big business. Just remember...The game is sold, not told." The two engage in a complicated hand ritual and part each other's company. The street resumes its normal silence.

Fast forward to the present. The Places: The Bay Area in the offices of Sick Wid It Records, *Tha Hall of Game*, and now, the *Hemp Museum*. Although the game of the old pimp still exists, B-Legit and his brother E-40 represent the big pimpin' of the future. As they prepare to drop B-Legit's newest release on the world, they are about to change the pimp's credo from the game is sold not told, to the game is sold *and* told.

THE SOURCE: Let's talk about your latest release, *Hemp Museum*, and the whole vibe that surrounds B-Legit.

B-LEGIT: Let me let you get some insight on the Hemp Museum. First of all, 40 named that album. Right? I had a song on my freshman album called "The Dank Room." But now we done moved up to a bigger scale. And with a bigger scale, we're dealing with a bigger audience and bigger people. So, "The Dank Room" turned into the Hemp Museum. Right?

I heard that you were making moves and starting your own record label.

That's what you don't understand. I'm half owner of Sick Wid It Records. So the Celly Cels and all that stuff you see with Sick Wid It Records, that's my stuff. That's all my thang, me and 40 Waters' (E-40).

So how did you all get started?

In '87, '88 we was on my uncle's label called Rushforce. He had done a gospel album before and he didn't know about makin' tapes and records and shit. So we had hooked up with him and that's when we came back from Grambling State University and did an album called *MVP*. You know, it was just some radio type of thing. We were just trying to get on the radio, trying to get known. So we said, "fuck that, we're gonna do our underground shit and come underground," and we changed our name to The Click, and that's when we came up with Sick Wid It Records. Since then we've had hella albums out. This ain't no overnight sensation.

What projects do you have coming up for Sick Wid It?

We got Celly Cel about to come back in '97. We got Leviti, who is the R&B singer. We got The Mossie. We just had a group called Funk Mob out. But in '97 we're signing some groups outside our

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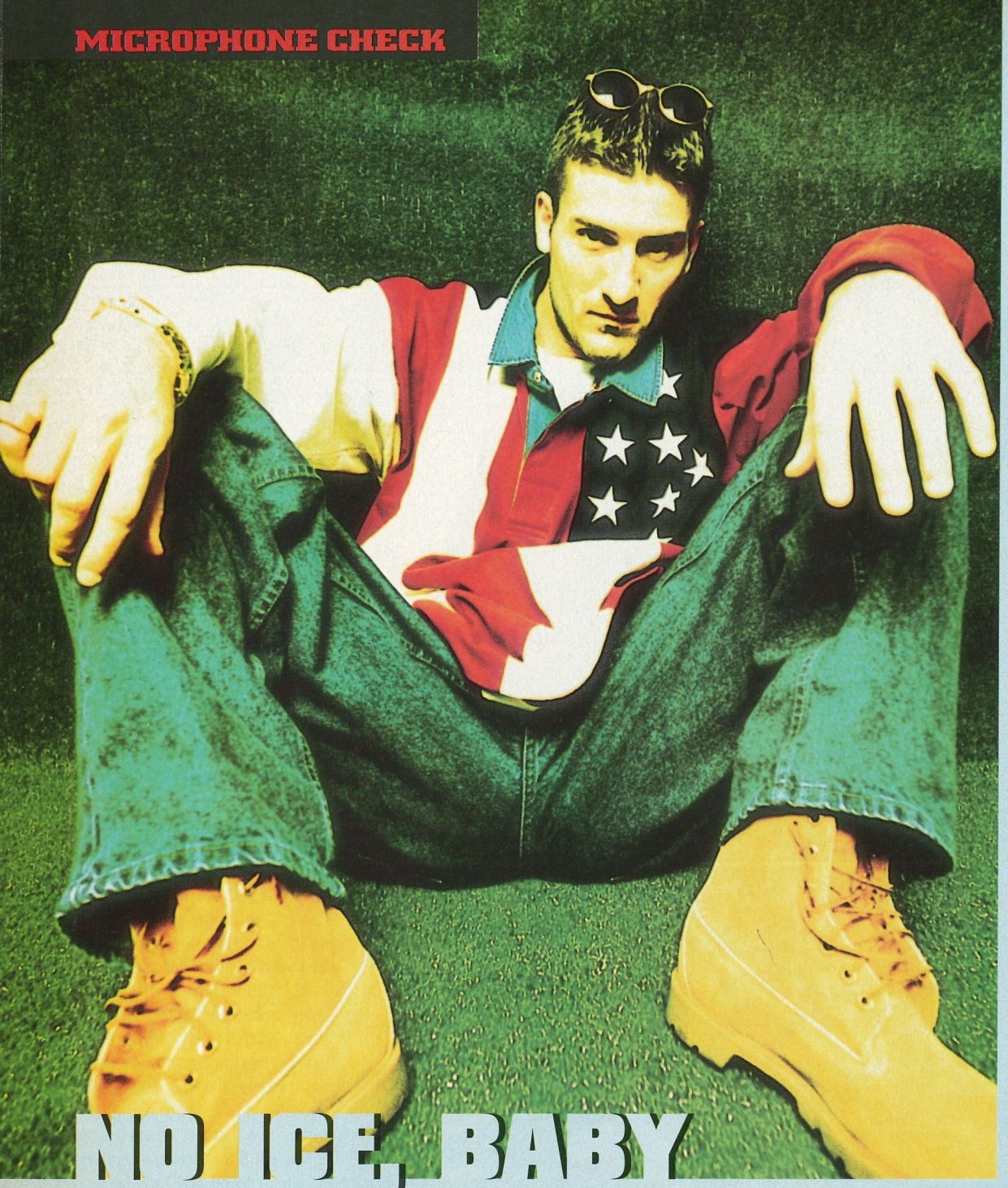
JIVE



NO ICE, BABY

SNOW

As a cursory viewing of the PBS documentary *Style Wars* or 1983's *Wild Style* will reveal, hip-hop culture has been racially all-inclusive since its beginnings. Back in the early Eighties, when the Funky Four + 1 More were performing at downtown New York hotspot the Mudd Club for a hip, largely white audience, and NYU student Rick Rubin (producer of T La Rock's "It's Yours") was pooling resources with manager Russell Simmons to found Def Jam Recordings, hip-hop was never intended to be a 100% Black thang. Well, perhaps 95%.

None of this was lost on 27-year-old Snow (née Darrin O'Brien) of Toronto, Canada. The Jamaican musical traditions of toasting and sound systems that provided the backbone for rap music are what Snow was immersed in up north, at endless annual Carabana festivals. Born to Irish parents, but raised in a heavily Caribbean-populated area, Snow showcased his mixed cultural upbringing on 1992's international dancehall hit "Informer." His latest album, *Justuss*, builds on his previous *12 Inches of Snow* and *Murder Love* albums, proving that all nationalities can shine in Black-dominanted music forms—as long as the funk isn't faked.

THE SOURCE: Your latest album, *Justuss*, has already reached platinum status in Japan. Do you think you get greater love for your work outside of the United States?

SNOW: Well, I couldn't get over to America for a couple of years. For a while, I'd been banned from America. So, I really didn't see it to come over here, promote, and do all the things I had to do. So now, I'm on a pass, so I'm gonna be getting into the United States.

Why were you banned in the U.S.?

'Cause of my old time criminal record.

What did that stem from?

When I was younger, I used to drink and fight, get into a lot of fights and stuff. It was like I had nothing else to do, so I just hung around with my friends drinking and getting in trouble. So, you know, I got charged a lot. It reflected on my life after, when I got a record career. It's holding me back from that. A lot of rappers have been in jail.

How do you think hip-hop culture has affected Canada?

It's just as deep as there, I guess. Why you don't hear a lot of rappers coming out of there is because there's nobody really pushing it over there. There's no record labels. They have to come over here, and then by the time they thinking they're coming over here, they're really discouraged. But it's strong over there; reggae music's strong, hip-hop music.

What reggae artists influenced you coming up in Toronto?

Most of the singers. Michael Rose, people like that. I like old stuff much better, but people like Bounty Killer, Buju Banton, Beenie Man, Shabba Ranks. A lot of people got their own thing going on. I like a song from *him*, and I like a song from *him*. It's not like one artist that I like. I like songs from different people.

Do you consider yourself a dancehall artist, or hip-hop, or reggae?

I consider myself just an entertainer. I just do all music. I grew up with rock n' roll, hip-hop, and all different kinds of music. I guess I'm all mixed up when it comes to my music, you know? I just think anything's good music.

How do you feel about the current direction of hip-hop and dancehall?

Hip-hop, now, I guess a lot of people are talking about materialism. That's how they wanna live, they wanna express themselves that way. They're enjoying it—they're enjoying Cristal and cigars and nice suits, then let 'em enjoy it. And reggae music, reggae got into the gun business for a minute. It's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 94

ANDREW MACNAUGHTAN

BRONX HIGH LIFE

CAMP LO

Think back to the classic line, "After school, I take a dip in the pool, which is really on the wall," from Sugarhill Gang's "Rapper's Delight," and any fool can see the current blur between fantasy and reality plaguing rap today. Maybe it came when "waitin' to get signed" and slanging rock merged for many MCs. Or maybe it was when videos made hip-hop a visual thang. Or (sigh!) it could have been the fading of that erstwhile prototype, the Bronx MC. But when Boogie Down-based duo Camp Lo—Geechie Suede, 21, and Sonny Cheba, 22—released their true school-styled single "Coolie High" last summer, the ebullition from their popped Moet bottles injected fantastical images (and language) of a hip-hop imagination gone by. Their cinematic debut, *Uptown Saturday Night,* not only resurrects the mystique of the Bronx MC, but puts the forgotten idea of *surreal* Big Willie fantasies back into rap. But is Camp Lo ready for hip-hop's "real world?"

THE SOURCE: Geechie, after you took Sonny on as a partner, what made y'all come up with the cinematic concept for the group and your album?

GEECHIE: For me, that was always (Sonny's) thing. It was different, unique. When he brought up the idea, I was like, it's fly, let's do it.

SONNY: I was always into the Black flicks. Plus my pops had me into all that blaxploitation. It was to the point that that's all a cat knew since I was a kid. It was to the point where I couldn't watch *Happy Days* on TV. That's how deep my pops had me into the Black nostalgia thing, Black history period.

With all the Cristal, Moet and Henny busting off in your music's imagery, how are y'all different?

SONNY: We're not commercial like those cats are commercial. Right now, Cristal and all that is commercial.

GEECHIE: Our whole thing was to go against the grain. We always wanted to be like sore thumbs to stick out. We want to have niggas debating about where these cats (Camp Lo) are coming from. We know the angle we're coming from is all a movie angle. But why? Why are they coming at it like

CONTINUED ON PAGE 94

CHRISTIAN LANTRY

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For us hip-hoppers in particular, Spring meant that the newest of the new footwear would soon be within our grasp. Whether we called them kicks, grips, dogs, or sneaks, we bit our fingernails in anticipation of the latest flavors from our favorite sneaker companies. And we never imagined that the styles we discarded from one year to the next would someday be preserved as sacred classics and nostalgic icons of an era gone by.

But times change and collective tastes reflect those changes. In today's "bigger-better-faster" environment, designing athletic footwear is a complicated science. With more emphasis being placed on activity-specific specialization and performance enhancement, the modern-day sneaker is a far cry from the shoes of a decade ago (not to mention the canvas and rubber creations that came before them). And as times continue to change, athletic footwear will undoubtedly evolve to meet those changes. Ten years from now, the sneakers presented here for Spring '97 just *might* be remembered with fondness. Or who knows? With a little luck, they may even earn the coveted title of "classic."

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The Spring '97 Sneaker Exhibit

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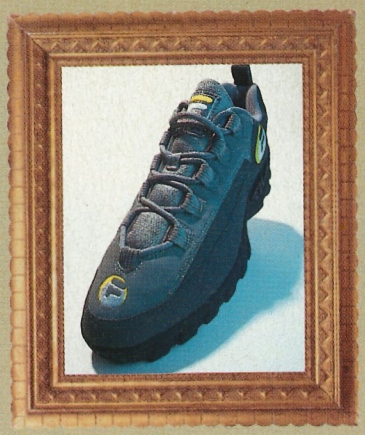

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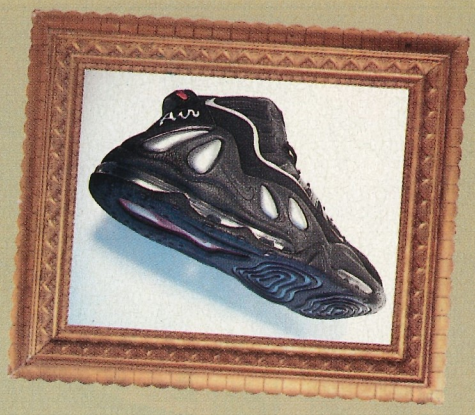

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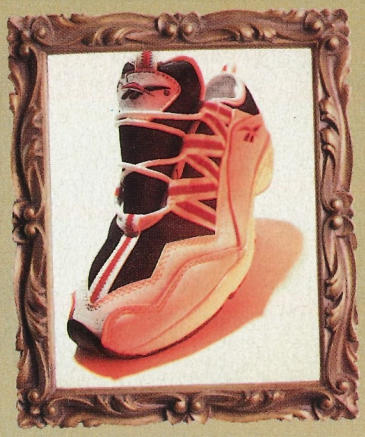

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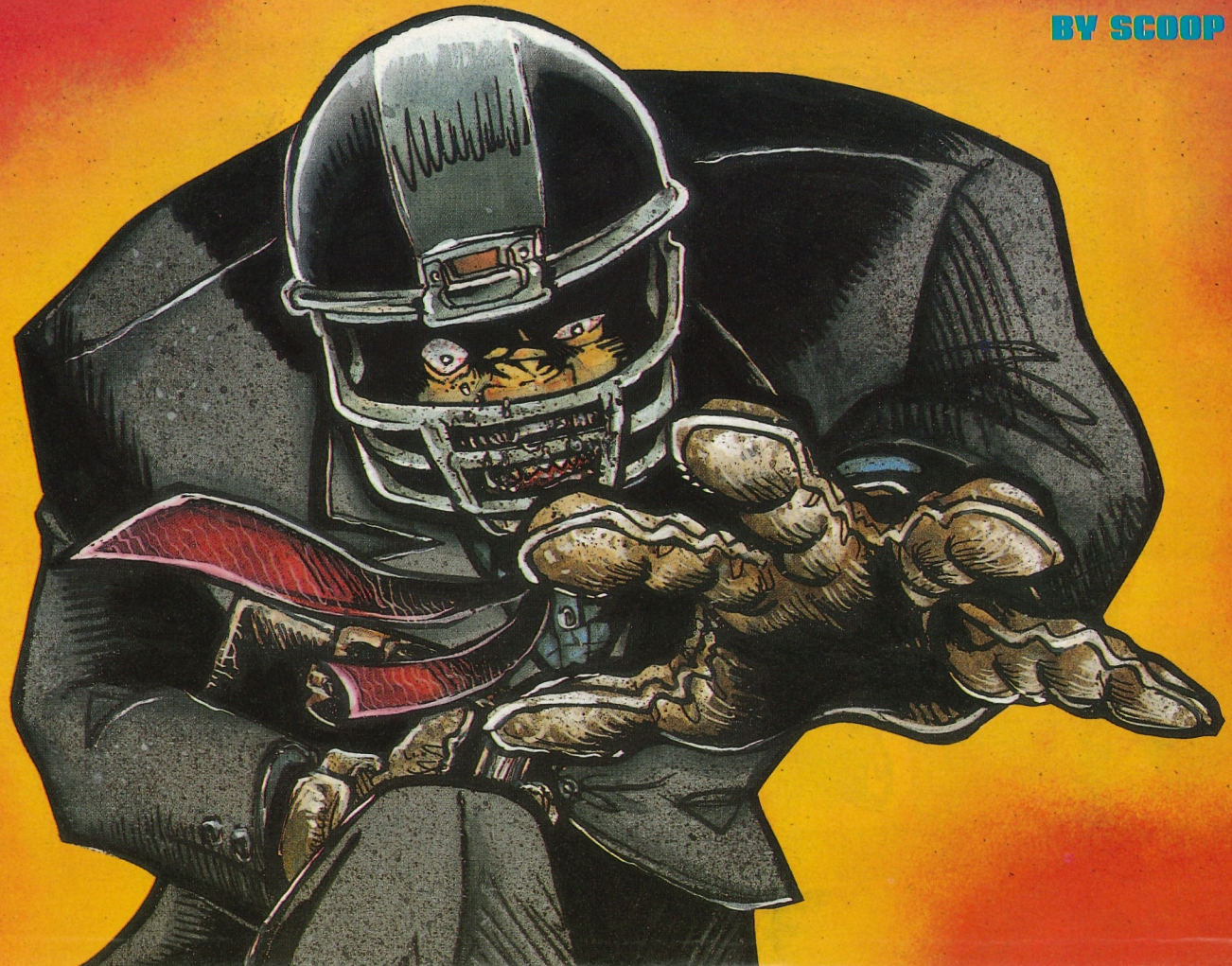
BLACK BALLIN'

When it comes to their hold on financially managing Black talent, white agents have long enjoyed a 'good ol' boys' relationship with the NBA. Realizing the danger this monopoly poses, Black agents insist it's time to take 'Affirmative Action.'

BY SCOOP JACKSON



Outside the Chicago Bulls locker room, Allen Iverson is having a conversation. He is surrounded by men in suits. They are much older and much richer than him. He says nothing, he's polite. He just sits back and listens to the words rolling from the mouths of the people who are "concerned" about his future. As I enter the cipher to give Allen some love, I notice one particular man. Standing very close to Allen, saying nothing, is David Falk. I acknowledge Falk and whisper jokingly into Allen's ear, "I see you're keeping good company." He laughs. Gives me a hug. And he's out. On to meet Jordan.

Kevin Poston is pissed. He has the right to be. His company, PSP (Professional Sports Planning), just lost another superstar to a white agent. Somehow, somewhere, something is not right. "It's one thing to say who's the *best* agent," says Poston, an attorney who, along with brother Carl, heads a new era of Black lawyers embarking in sports, that could change the face of athletic representation and marketing. "But it's another thing to say who's the best agent for *that* kid." Unfortunately, Poston isn't the only one heated. Black sports agents and lawyers across the country are falling in line. They are disturbed about what is becoming a growing trend: a great segment of the top sports talent in the world is running to white agencies and white attorneys to handle their futures and lives after the ball stops bouncing.

Sports has always been a modern day form of slavery. The only difference between Charles Barkley and Chicken George is that the pay-off is financially greater. Whether cock fighting or playing basketball, both bask in the limelight and excel at what they do, but ultimately, both are working for somebody else. Over the years, basketball has been the sport where the master-slave relationship seems to be getting even worse. Although there are a greater number of Black athletes represented by Black agents in the NBA, it is more evident—especially with the influx of underclassmen and high-schoolers jumping into the league—that non-Black agencies and agents are snatching-up prize clients quicker than we used to snatch-up cotton.

Of the top ten players selected in the NBA draft lottery this year, none were represented by Blackness. From Marcus Camby to Kobe Bryant, the list of future Black superstars who chose Black people to handle their futures—a list that seemed to be growing over the last few years with Penny Hardaway, Jason Kidd, Glenn Robinson, Chris Webber—came to a screeching halt. According to one Black attorney, "Ray Allen, Kerry Kittles, Iverson and Marcus Camby never went through the Civil Rights Movement. They've never had to run a business. So they really don't understand the effect they have on us by not signing with someone Black. They need to learn, they need to be chastised."

Maybe. But the depth of the problem doesn't lie at the players' Nikes. According to Len Elmore, former president and CEO of Precept Sports and Entertainment, Inc., whose clients included NBA stars Sam Cassell and Joe Smith, Black coaches play a major role in perpetuating this disturbing trend. "A lot of it starts with the coaches. Sometimes financial arrangements are made before they get to us. That makes it very difficult for us [Black agents] to play. It's not about being racist, it's simply about being able to play with a fair hand."

"He's right, but it goes further than that," says Kevin Poston, who constructed one of the largest contracts for any individual player in sports history and represents Anfernee "Penny" Hardaway. "It becomes a matter of responsibility. We know we're not going to get the same chances as the white firms because they have white

ILLUSTRATION BY LARRY LEE

universities and coaches supporting them and not recommending us—no matter what we do. But Black parents, coaches, etc., should make these opportunities happen because no one understands the Black athlete more than another Black professional. So if an agent is Black and competent, not only should he or she be chosen for Black reasons, but also for green ones."

"I love John Thompson," Poston continues, sounding more idealistic than nationalistic. "But what happened with Allen Iverson hurt me. That's why I was upset. No Black agency or agent even got the chance to interview Iverson. It has nothing to do with him going to Falk. It has more to do with none of us getting a chance to even talk to a potential first-rounder who has a Black coach that already knows what we [Black agents] are up against. There has to be an element of responsibility and accountability there that is being missed. Every white coach made sure his Black player was put in front of white agents for selection. It's that simple."

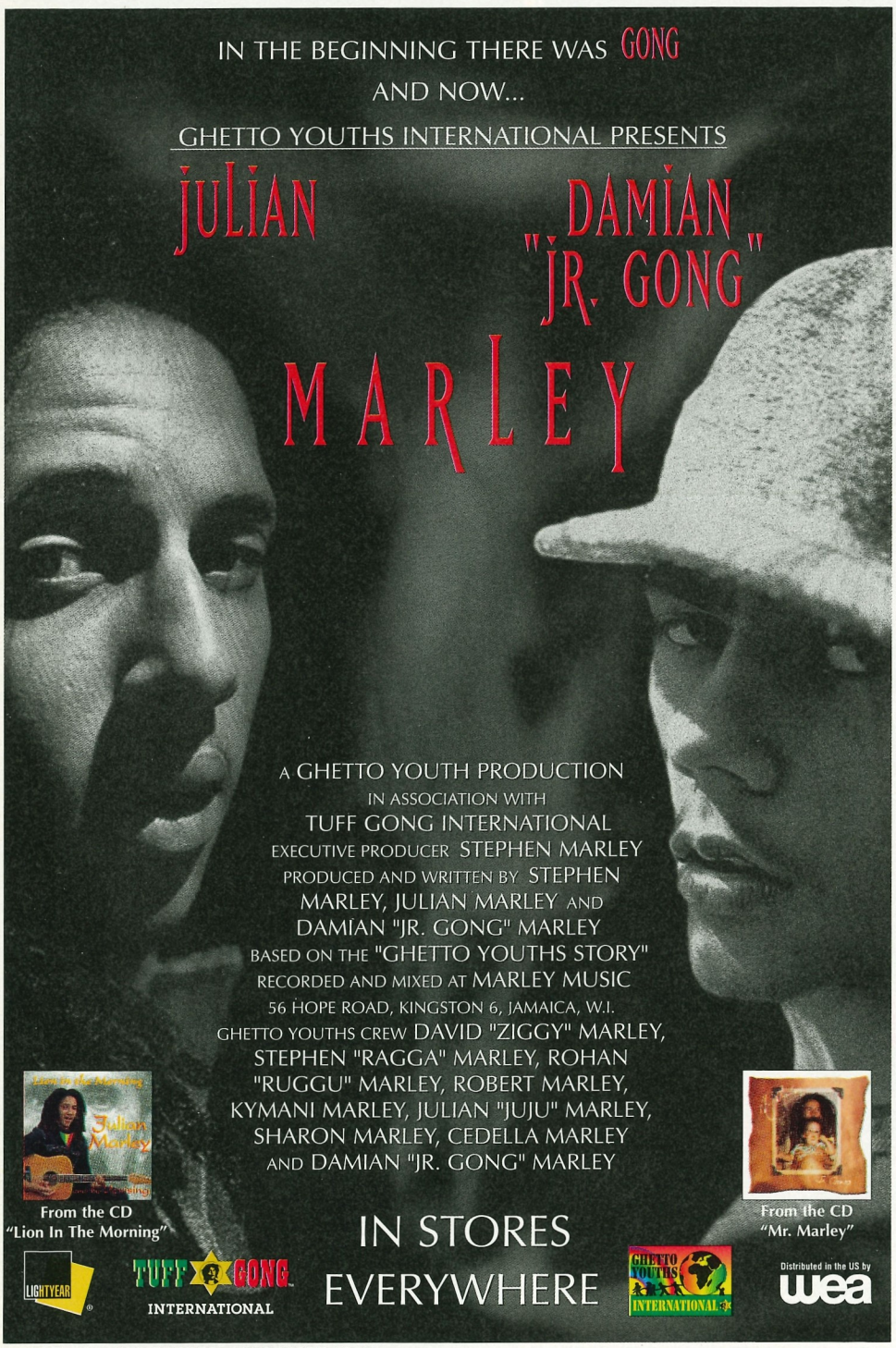
True enough, the Black Coaches Association is one of the strongest governing bodies in the NCAA. Most of its members take on the responsibility of not only coaching Black players, but also becoming their guidance counselors. Since so few NCAA basketball "power houses" are headed by Black coaches (no Black Athletic Directors), then it becomes almost imperative for some of these coaches to "assist" the Black agent in at least getting a chance at signing one of his players—especially the ones slated to be lottery picks.

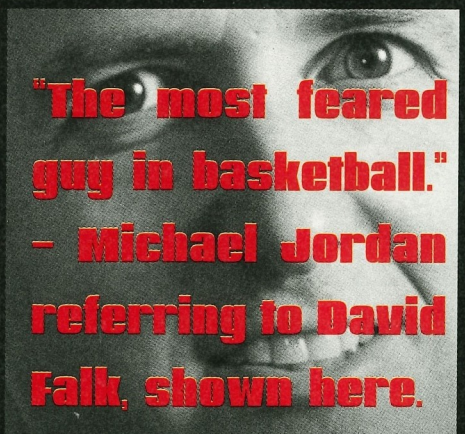
It's a helluva thing to be the best at something and still be overlooked. Dr. Charles Tucker and Eugene Parker are geniuses. Tucker and Parker have the uncanny distinction of being able to take advantage of the smallest situations presented to them and turn them into contracts that make the cover of *Sports Illustrated*. Parker's Deion Sanders deal shook up the world in a way Ali never could, and Tucker still has people tripping over his 'alleged' demand of $100 million for Glenn "Big Dog" Robinson (even though he ended up 'settling' on $68 million over 10 years). That's hard work. That's brilliance. But they are not alone in being geniuses in this game, or in their ability to "persuade for the better interest of the client" or in "getting market value." Most of today's Black agents act as legal prodigies, securing deals that without their insight and effort would be merely average.

Several other Black agents and attorneys have come along in recent years and have made a tremendous impact in an area of sports that once was as white as the faces on the dollar bills they are struggling for. Between Tucker (Robinson), the Poston brothers (Penny Hardaway, Robert Horry), Bill Strickland (Chris Webber, Rasheed Wallace, Allan Houston), David Odom (Mitch Richmond), Hank Thomas (Tim Hardaway), and Aaron Goodwin (Jason Kidd, Gary Payton), the 'Black market' in the NBA seems to be tight. Wrong. Still close to 70% of the players in the NBA are represented by white agents, lawyers and agencies. Outside of Falk (whose clients include Jordan, Patrick Ewing, Alonzo Mourning, Juwan Howard, Iverson), the agents running the NBA are Len Armato (Shaquille O'Neal, Hakeem Olajuwon), Arm Tellems (Reggie Miller, Latrell Sprewell, Rod Strickland), Jimmy Sextons (Scottie Pippen), Glen Guthries (Barkley), Herb Rudoys (over 15 players), and agencies like ProServ, who have almost turned agenting into a monopoly. Case-in-point: of the twelve NBA players who represented America in the Olympics this year on the Dream Team, only three (Hardaway, Richmond and Payton) had Black agents.

The 'power' broker in this is Falk. For years he has reigned as "NBA Big Willie," building a star-studded client base that looks like an All-Star game roster. He is the pinnacle, the one every attorney emulates. He, of course, is white. This summer alone he was at the forefront of signing the three top deals in NBA free agency. Between Jordan, Mourning and Howard, Falk negotiated over $230 million worth of business; and that's not including Iverson, who is this year's highest paid rookie.

"The most feared guy in basketball." That's how Michael Jordan referred to Falk this summer before he negotiated his one-year, $30 million contract with the Bulls. "He's brash, arrogant, egotistical... He's the best at what he does. He figures out what your objectives are. He understands the market; he understands the players."





Especially those who have played for Georgetown. Along with Iverson, Falk has represented damn-near every G'Town superstar once their co-ed days in DC were over. Patrick Ewing, Dikembe Mutombo, Mourning, Eric "Sleepy" Floyd, Reggie Williams, Iverson. That the list will probably go on into the future is what upsets many Black attorneys who know that John Thompson is not a sell-out, but feel that often he is selling *them* out.

"If I want a dog to guard my home, I don't want no damned poodle," says Thompson in his own defense. Protective and assured custody, that's what Falk offers Thompson's players; that's what every coach wants for his players once they leave school. But is David Falk the only agent in the world that can supply it, or is he just the best at it?

"I'm struggling against (Falkism) right now," says Mitch Richmond's agent David Odom, the president of DTO Sports, who recently filed a federal civil rights suit against the NBA on behalf of ex-three-point champion and former Chicago Bull Craig Hodges. "I'm one of the few people who closes deals and is still a practicing attorney. I'm more qualified and more educated than 99% of my white counter-parts. The stigmatism of being Black in this game hurts, but we've got to get beyond that. It's not about being Black. It's about being Black and competent. And it is extremely naive for the players to think that the problem [of not getting clients] is not inter-related to the stigmatism. There needs to be some sort of accountability."

In these cases, accountability comes in the form of John Thompson, John Chaney, George Raveling, Todd Bozman, Nolan Richardson, and the rest of the Black coaches who parade the sidelines every winter, holding the futures of young Black men in their hands. Few 19-year-olds are prepared to go it alone, making multi-million dollar decisions that will impact the rest of their lives. Choosing which agent truly has his best interest at heart is a part of that critical long-term decision. It is common knowledge that the players often look to their coaches for guidance. Black coaches have to step up. Is it Dean Smith's responsibility? Or is it Rick Pitino's? At some point the arena of trust between the Black player, the Black coach and the Black agent needs to be developed, if only to give the client some leverage when it comes time to negotiate the dollars and make sense of it all.

What also makes this year's situation so crucial is the fact that before the 1996 draft in the NBA, a shift in consciousness was beginning to take shape among the new school players on the verge of running the league. Many of the young superstars coming into the league were consciously going for Black representation because of the horror stories they heard from former players about not having Black agents. Also, many were aware of the fact that Penny Hardaway and Chris Webber "got theirs." This year was a step backwards.

"I don't know what happened, but I'm concerned," said Dana London, executive director of Transition Team, a not-for-profit life-skills organization designed to bridge the gap of socialization and economics of the Black athlete prior to turning pro. "Over 20 of the brothas coming into the NBA next year have no college degrees. The NCAA, the agents, the teams, none of them are interested remotely in these kids getting smarter, or being able to care for themselves once their playing days are over. Somewhere it becomes our job to look out for one another, because ultimately we are the only ones who really know how much we stand to lose. We've been there. Many of the white agents haven't."

Kevin Poston agrees. "History has taught us that sometimes we need to take care of ourselves. Whites may set up programs, but they may not always be the best programs for *us*. David Falk isn't hiring any brothas to work with him, just those to work *for* him. If we turn the tables and the athlete is white and the agent is Black, the white athlete won't give that competent Black agent the time of day. All you have to do is look at the percentages. The bottom line in this is that we're killing each other. It's not about excluding them [white agents] as much as it is about including Black, competent professionals for Black economic developmental reasons."

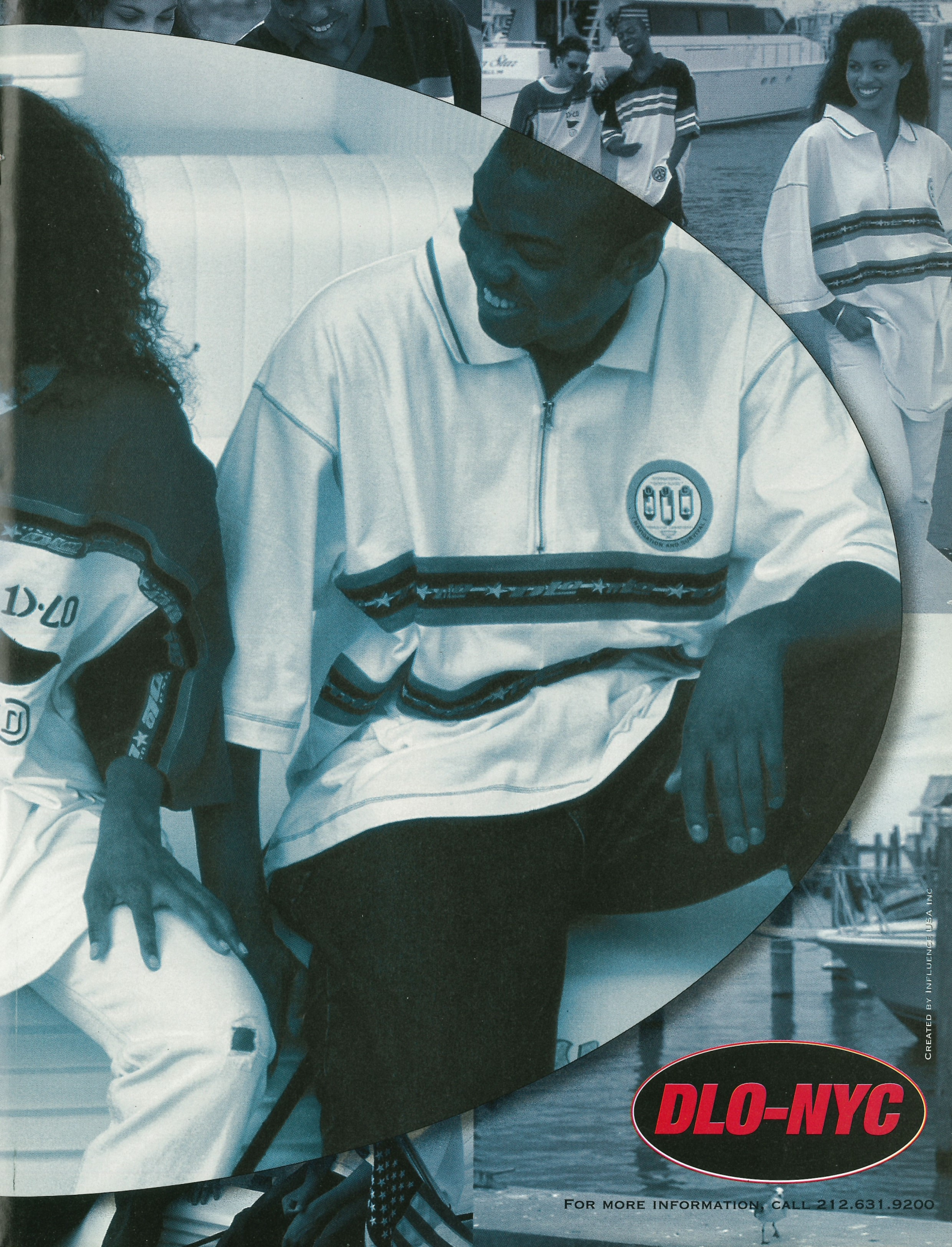
Then there are the outstanding factors, like the total effect this small percentage of "partnerships" has on the African-American community. Dismissed in the hoopla is the lingering damage that is being done to the esteem of Black neighborhoods when white-owned businesses (including team ownership and representation) dictate the time Black players can devote to hands-on appearances in the communities that produced them in the first place. Once a Black ball player signs his name on that contract, he becomes a Black business. Period. Somehow, there are no guidelines provided to enable the athlete to do the right thing for the Black community or selected Black neighborhoods for outreach programs. Historically, neither the team nor the agent—if white—make sure these needs are taken care of. Simply put, they have other needs and another agenda. As a white agent who asked to remain anonymous said, "How many white or Jewish athletes have Black representation?"

It's a shame that Black agents have to "personally thank" Black athletes for having a conscious, followed by an, "oh by the way brotha, you have a nice game too" speech. It should not be about color, and as Kenneth Shropshire points out in his book, *Race In Sports In Black & White*, it really isn't. By definition, it's about trust of a color and gaining an understanding that if the Black athlete does not believe or support and employ the Black agent, nobody else will. It's not like John Stockton is about to do it.

How would the world of sports be different if Michael Jordan was represented by a Black man or Black woman? Then perhaps we could finally deal with another dark cloud. Then the darkest cloud would be cast by Jordan's failure to gain the mainstream acceptability he currently enjoys. Rather than being a universal hero, white suburban youth and their parents would feel much more uneasy accepting Jordan as their American hero. Could Jordan (or any other Black player for that matter, who is equipped with a Black agent), make a commitment to the Black community, and have an ongoing presence within it, and still be accepted by the mainstream?

Before we can get to that issue, we have to first deal with this one. And whether anyone wants to admit it or not, there is a problem—and it isn't David Falk. The lack of Black representation in the NBA, as in all sports, rests strictly in the hands of the Black ball player who needs to want to do more than appear in "revolutionized" television commercials and do trivial community service work after his career is over. It rests in the lap of the Black coaches who must find it necessary to be a liaison between Black agents/lawyers in at least making their players aware that several competent and brilliant ones do exist; and identify who some of them are and who they already represent. It rests in the minds of the parents who have to have faith in the fact that there are professional Black business people out there who have more interest in their son's life than just his ability to score 30 on Christian Laettner or LJ. Ultimately, it also rests in the hearts of those Black agents who know deep down that they can do the job, and are beyond waiting for John Thompson to exhale and "hook them up." Until we realize this, the mission to build on Black representation in sports will remain impossible.

The 'every brotha is his brotha's keeper' proverb becomes very difficult to follow when dollar signs are attached to it. The of lack of Black representation boils down to the unwillingness of some Black folks to trust each other's competence. As Len Elmore said, "It's not even about competition between us. I'm just happy when I hear that Strickland or Tucker got somebody, instead of somebody else getting that client." Given the growing wall between qualified Black agents and outstanding athletes, the divide-and-conquer syndrome cannot be simply dismissed as Black paranoia. The wall seems to be quite a relevant lifeline of the NBA. The question is how long will the Carl and Kevin Poston's of the world be able to last if the NBA's future stars continue to believe that the white man's water may not be a little wetter, it just tastes better?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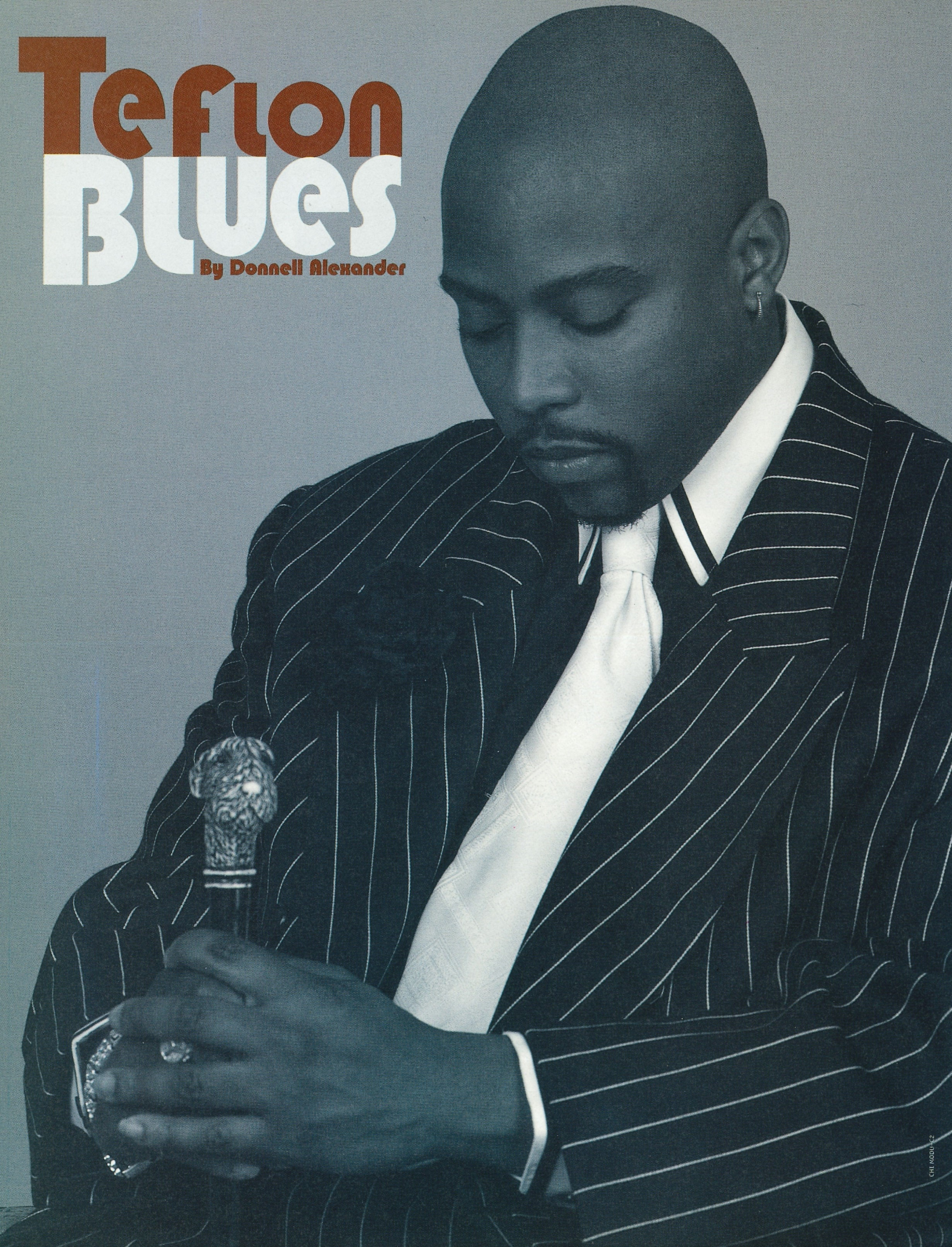
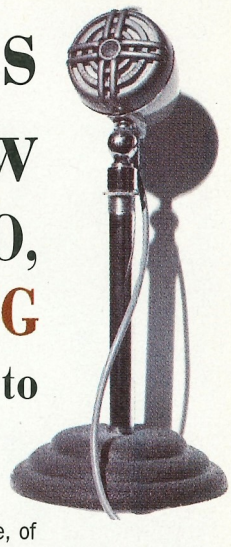
Teflon Blues

By Donnell Alexander



Amidst dizzy speculations swirling around a Death Row empire suddenly stripped of its powerful CEO, founding producer, and leading star, NATE DOGG stands resolute—a modern day bluesman, finally ready to murmur his soul-coated angst to the hip-hop community.



One night last June, Nate Dogg slid his fullback's body into his new black Lexus and drove from the downtown Los Angeles courthouse to Death Row's recording studio on the west side. He could have taken the freeway in the opposite direction, to his new house in Pomona where the mother of his children and his offspring waited. Instead, he headed to the studio. Something was compelling him.

Upon entering, a beat rained down straight to Nate Dogg's heart as only the deepest sound could. This beat, hooked up by his ace homey Kurupt, lifted him out of the boring part of putting a record together and up to a higher level. It was dope. *This is important, because if Nate ain't feeling a beat, he ain't writing a goddamn thang.* The austere sound put him in mind of his troubles, the case he had caught, the jail time he was facing. This was hardly his debut among Amerikka's Most Wanted, and, if convicted, he wouldn't be seeing those sons or their mother or anyone he loved for a long time—except through half-inch glass.

So he started writing, training his basset-hound eyes on the paper in front of him. His feelings poured out smooth and easy, just like his dogg Snoop's rhymes flow. In plain language, he first wrote about his girl, a person he could count on through all sorts of weather. Then he looked back over the lives and crimes that had landed him in this predicament, and wrote about that. Finally, Nate Dogg signed off with a resignation to incarceration: "I guess I'll call my lady, and tell her to kiss my baby. They tell me crime is all that I know how to do." Forty-five minutes after he started, Nate had completed the verses to "Never Leave Me Alone."

"Then Snoop came in just as I was writing the second chorus, and it took him about the same time to write his verse. I mean, that song was done real fast. Real fast," he says. "I think Snoop could feel [the song] too, because he's been in a similar situation. Experience helps a lot in the writing process."

It's a mixed blessing, this life Nate leads. Growing up in Long Beach, his church-going people did all they could to shield him from the dirt going down in the streets. Yet his soul-stirring voice is his only obvious legacy from the gospel indoctrination. After high school he joined the military, but that shit didn't take either. Nate's a good man but he's worldly, and when you come from where he does that combination don't add up to nothing but trouble.

"My music's all I got. I ain't got no more chances," he says. Nate's wearing his trademark bowler hat as he sits in a Beverly Hills deli, picking apart a chicken sandwich he criticizes as being "too flossy." And he's probably right; nobody needs this much lettuce. "I don't know nuttin'. Gotta go be a police or somethin' if I'm not up in this music."

With his debut album, *G-Funk Classics, Volume One,* Nate Dogg's all up in the music like Suge Knight's been on lockdown: with serious authority and longevity. Now he can officially lay claim to writing the book on G-Funk, one of the decade's most influential new styles, instead of leaving the matter open to interpretation. Back when he was known as plain old Nathaniel Hale and was counting bullets on Okinowa, he never would have thought hip-hop would take it this far.

He joined the Marines, "to see if I was a man—that was the question going through my mind." And he found an affirmative answer during basic training. However, the punchline to the joke of joining the military is that he had three more years of service left. He was slotted as munitions specialist, which meant that every day he'd have to wake up at 5 a.m. to go guard bullets and grenades. He'd have to count "them motherfuckers too." He counted bullets in Okinowa, counted bullets in Alabama, even counted bullets in Australia. While he worked, he would sing, "Just like the slaves used to do."

Nate had always sung. His mama had him in a group by the time he was five years old: The Hale Family Singers. They were a gospel outfit whose origins reached back to little Nathaniel's aunties and uncles. It's no thing to Nate to admit that, although he's the one with the record deal, it's his relatives who can really get down. And they gave him his start. When it came to performing, Nate was shy and still is to this day. But the experience gave him something to build on when he and his homeys started rapping in the streets of Long Beach.

"I developed my skills by writing raps," Nate says. "Snoop and them was writin' raps, and I'd sit down and write raps too. Then I'd put some hooks in them, and the next thing you'd know I was singin' the whole verse. Then it was like, 'Damn, I could just sing this.'"

'Snoop and them' are, of course, Snoop Doggy Dogg and Warren G, the MC and the DJ from the legendary group 213. The group came together during Nate's high school days. They named themselves after the Oakland 415, whose rapping leader Richie Rich was another silken-voiced hip-hop artist who surely can feel the sentiments expressed in "Never Leave Me Alone." (Doubled R did time on a coke rap before even making his major label debut.) At the mention of Richie Rich, Nate gets as animated as he's likely to. Yeeeah! He's got that Richie Rich shit out in the car, right now. "Let's riide," he sings. "That's tight!"

Now, to hear folks tell it, everybody and their mama loved 213 when the group was around, but the truth is that some people laughed at them, others said they were wasting their time and needed to get jobs. Warren, Snoop and Nate made enough money selling tapes to get into the odd party at Cal State Long Beach and buy a new pair of khakis here and there. People liked their music, no matter how lightly they took the 213 project as a way of life.

"I think if we had the money or the power to do that back then, I think we would have made a lot of money." But there was no such thing as Death Row Records, and G-funk was nothing but a backstreet concept. So Nate Dogg did that stretch in the Marines. A week after he was discharged, he bumped into Snoop, hooked up with Warren and they were 213-ing it again like that.

The rest of the 213 story is well known. Snoop helped a certain non-rapping DJ waltz his way into status as the best known producer making rap records, and became an extra-large star in his own right. Warren G rode a Michael McDonald sample to fame and fortune. That left Nate Dogg, who was going to have to hurry up and wait.

He put his vocal imprint on "Regulate," and set it off for brothers singing on rap records. The video made Nate's face famous and put a little something in his pockets, unlike his debut on Dr. Dre's "Deez Nuts." Appearances on high profile records such as Snoop's "Ain't No Fun," Thug Life's "How Long Will They Mourn Me?" and "One More Day," his solo turn from *Murder Was The Case*, kept him in the public ear, dispelling one-hit-

MICROPHONE/ARCHIVE PHOTOS

wonder notions. They also helped cement the sad-souled bluesman persona that haunts his records to this day. As he waited to showcase his talent on a Death Row album of his own, pressures accrued that were as daunting as the hardcore subject matter he sings about. Snoop's record came out, then Tha Dogg Pound. Two years after "Regulate," Tupac joined the label. He was appearing all over everyone else's records, but it became clear that Nate Dogg wouldn't have his own shit out before the end of 1996.

"I got a little nervous about that. I was like, 'Damn, I hope I have enough hits left over for when my album comes out,'" he says. But experience was the best teacher. He only needed to look to the careers of one-time Death Row stars-in-the making RBX and Lil' Half Dead to see that one needed to do a lot more looking than leaping.

"I think I'm one of the luckiest ones because I got to sit in the back and watch everything everybody was doing, but at the same time build my name up without putting an album out. To have people watching and waiting for my album, I think it would have been a little bit worse if I'da been droppin' songs nobody was likin', but every song I dropped, people was diggin' 'em," he says.

Death Row has a name that has signified a certain unshakable magic, or whatever. Suge Knight is to '90s hip-hop what Don King was to boxing in the '70s. At the time of his incarceration, Suge had shit locked down. It looked to the outside world like Death Row was all of rap. The way King capitalized for over three decades on folks' inclination to fight, Knight did in three years with

"I'm one of the luckiest ones because I got to sit in the back and watch everything everybody was doing, but at the same time build my name up without putting an album out."

their inherent will to artfully talk smack, and his legacy in rap is as fully impacted as the flame-haired one's pugilism record. But whereas King continues to run game, big Suge has been on ice, and the rap world wonders whether Nate Dogg's record will be one of the last high-impact Death Row joints.

Throughout the final stages of production on *G-Funk Classics, Volume One,* the relevant Death Row folk were on the phone with Suge on a daily basis, getting the record done. During the days while he was being held for violating parole, Suge had a phone in his cell, and, as Death Row spokesperson George Pryce puts it, "He was listening to music on the phone this morning."

"The beat writes my songs. The beat has to match my mood," Nate Dogg says, "then I'm off and running." The melody just comes, "and the life brings the words. In fact, this past year, I was in court for robbin' Taco Bells, check changers and all type of shit. If I'da went to jail, 'Never Leave Me Alone' would have been a hell of a real song for me." Pryce, the omnipresent publicist, interjects, "You have to add that those were mistaken identity robberies."

"I got acquitted no matter what it was," Nate Dogg says in that maple syrup baritone of his. "It wasn't me—the system said it wasn't me—and that's the only thing that matters. Me sayin' it wasn't me didn't mean a thing."

Daz hits Nate off lovely with three beats a week. He keeps thirty or so in the car at any given time. And as he transverses LA from Long Beach to Pomona and back to Death Row, he's got a pocket sized tape recorder at his side. "Never lose a melody. If it pop up out of my head, I might be done missed me two million. Just push record, toss it down. Then come back to it in the studio."

"Unbelievable pressures" that he won't call by name were all up in Nate's sphere like he's up in his music when he was recording *G-Funk Classics*. That stress doesn't merely manifest itself in the depth Nate gives his vocals, nor does it get left on the content table. It's all up in the style of the players and rhyme sayers. "Never Leave Me Alone" features soft keyboards that find their inspiration from the Roberta Flack and Donnie Hathaway's "Where is the Love." Indeed, they seem to exist simply to salve Kurupt's hardcore beat. On his rap, Snoop Dogg massages the space between words so that his country-ass voice signifies cool desperation like a weekday Hollywood yard sale. By the time he gets to his rhyme's last lines, "My girl's trippin': She got a lock on the phone," you better not have curtains in your ride—provided you listen while you ride—'cuz Snoop's rhyme will tear them shits d-zown.

Critics find Nate Dogg's subject tired, or find that his vocal inflections vary too little from subject to subject; but those who are game will wonder if there's ever been a record like this. (At this point, Nate would like to recognize LV, the only singer doing the post-"Regulate" thang whom he actually likes). He brings a sonic versatility that most rappers can't touch and an aura of realness that no one in contemporary R&B would want to step to. Doubters might want to try counting the number of records that even try to fuse hip-hop's lyrical intensity with blues, gospel and R&B stylings.

The trip in all this is that Nate's debut must forge a miasma of second-rate G-Funkery to get inside your earhole. A lot of kids ain't trying to hear no G-Funk at this point. But that's on the biters, and Nate says forgive them, for they know not what they do.

"I'm not mad at 'em, 'cuz we all out here tryin' to eat and survive," he says. "I don't get mad at 'em, but it irritates me when they don't come tight. Not to be pumpin' my own head up, but I think my own album is real tight. I came as tight as I could come."

It's an old cliché, but sadly enough, it's not tired: the wack mc's have not yet begun to bite. Just as the Wu provoked a slew of bitin'-ass crews into turning Japanese, Nate Dogg had the empty-headed copycats grabbing the nearest Negro or Negress and putting a mic in front of 'em. But Nate didn't put a gun to their heads, he ain't gave out a single record contract. Don't hate him because he sang beautifully.

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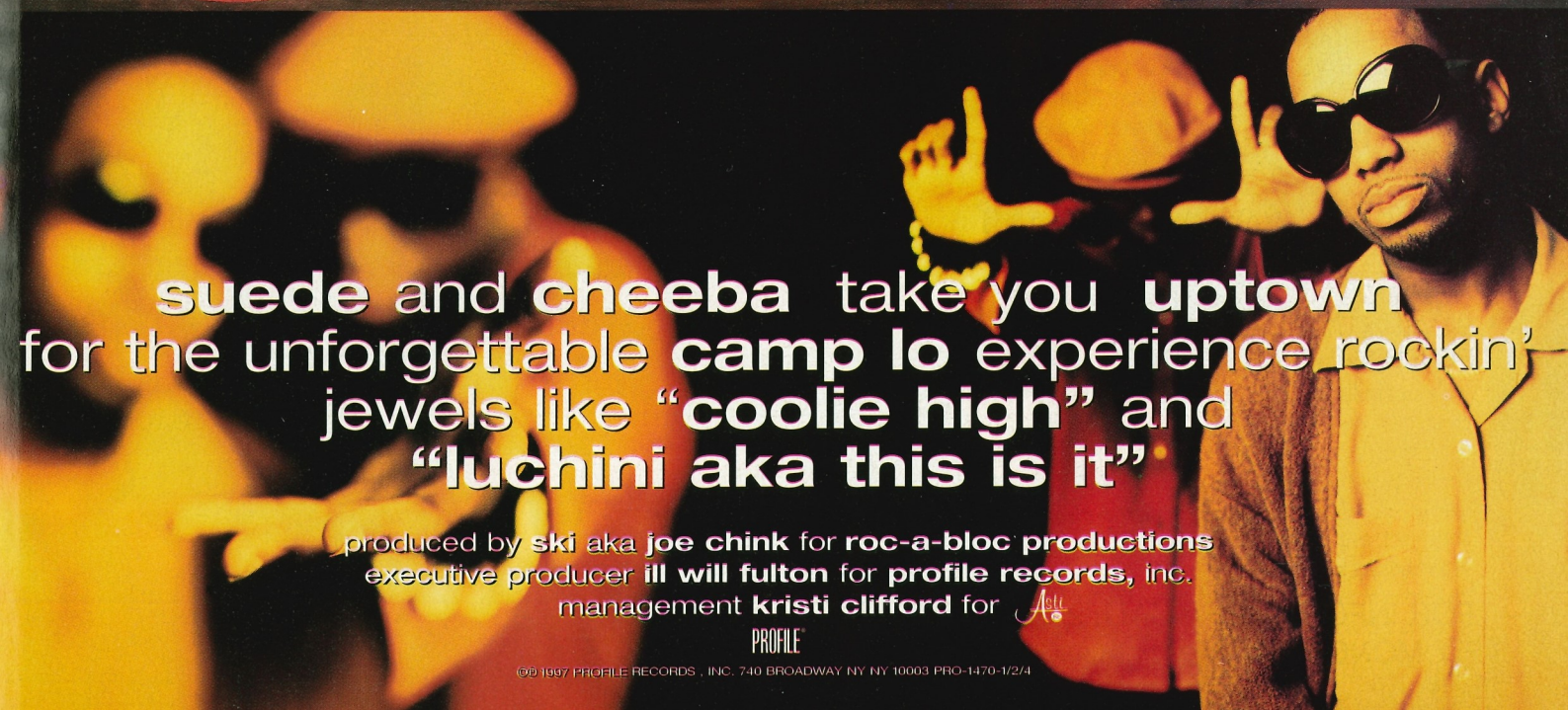

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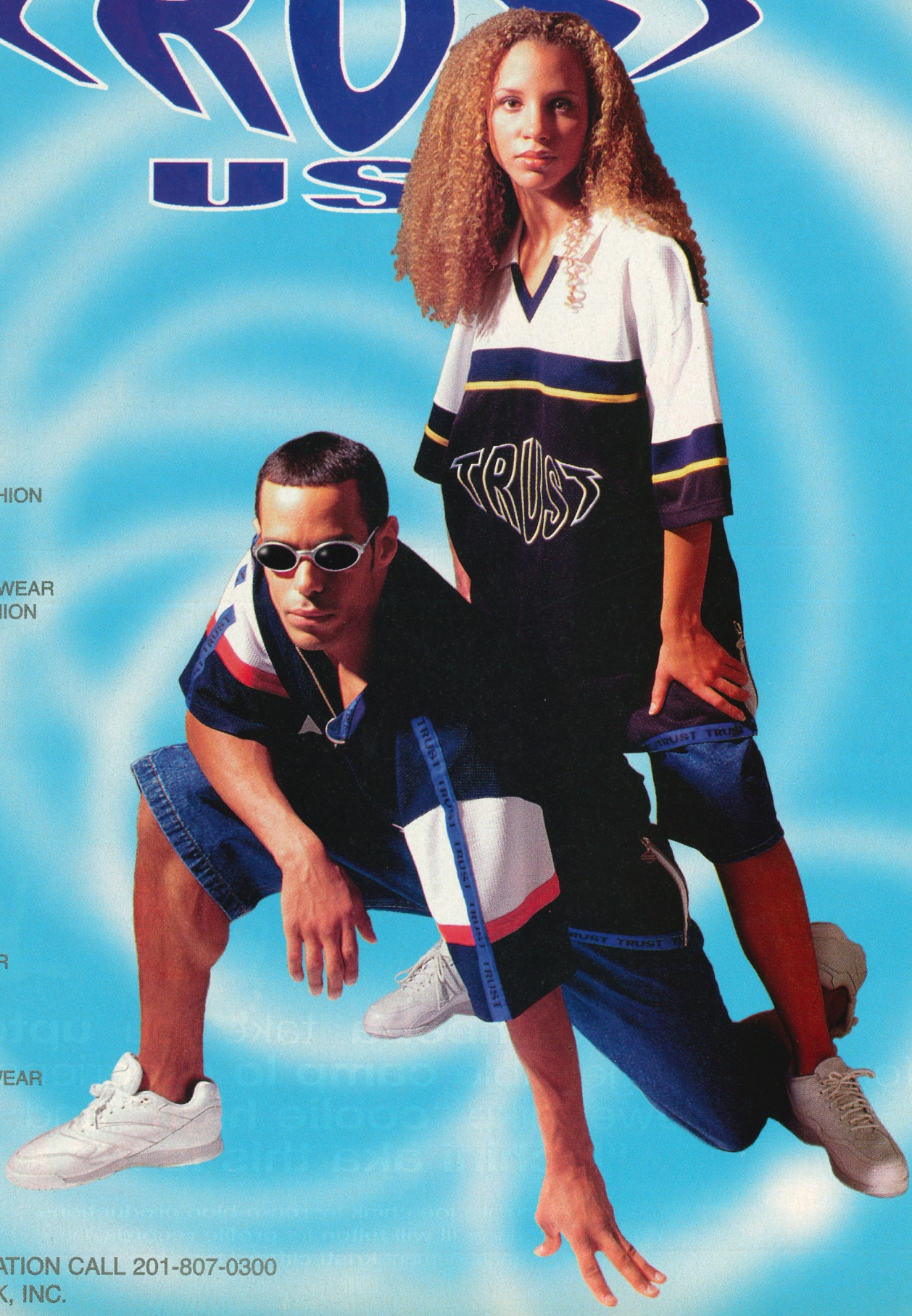

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Neo Soul: The Live Five

SOUL MUSIC HAS A NEW, YOUNGER FACE

By Adario Strange

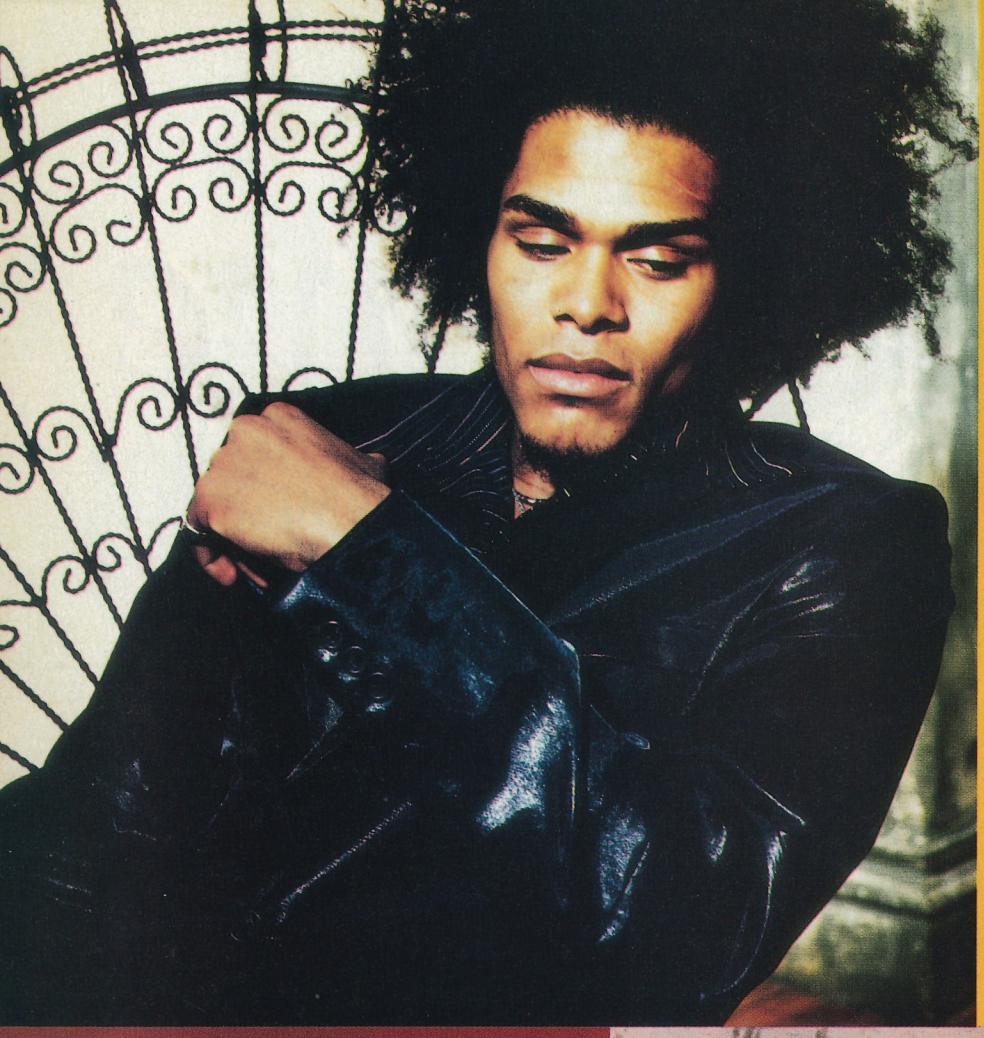
UNIVERSAL RECORDS

If you know your hip-hop music history, you're just as aware as the pioneers that hip-hop music was largely inspired by the raw vocal performances born in the world of Reggae, as well as the smooth grooves brought forth by '70s funk and soul music. Believe it or not, there once was a time when punk rock, salsa, disco and funk were played at a jam (see: The Roxy, New York City, over a decade ago) and it would have been considered a "hard-core" hip-hop party. It was no surprise to see a young white girl with blue, yellow and red hair, numerous chains and spiked wears, getting her groove on right next to a Cazal-wearin', Kangol-hatted break-boy. Somehow along the path of hip-hop music's growth into a billion dollar industry, we have allowed much of the music to become conservative in its own way. You can *try* to tell me that Blondie's "Rapture" (an old R&B/Rock tune by a decidedly un-ghetto, blonde-haired white woman) isn't hip-hop, but having participated in the creation of the culture as a young B-Boy, I know better.

Nowadays, if it doesn't sound like what we are used to on the radio, it simply *can't* be hip-hop. This kind of thinking has led to the stagnation (via the modification) of the lion's share of the music form. Sure times change, and often for good reason, but the original eclectic nature of hip-hop music is probably something that shouldn't change. It is with these thoughts in mind that we decided to showcase another side of the Hip-Hop Nation. The soul side. Presented for your review (read: don't sleep!), these individuals represent some of freshest sounds emanating from the jazz/soul/R&B/funk vaults of the young music makers of the '90s.

Erykah Badu

Born in the shotgun and liquor store riddled streets of South Dallas, Texas, Badu began singing as a child, nurtured by her mother, herself a talented singer and actress. Finding her muse in the world of dance and drama, the teenage Badu went on to attend the prestigious Arts Magnet High School in Dallas, where her talents were further honed. But it was in her off hours, away from dance class and instructors, that she passionately constructed rhymes and poems, dreaming of holding down the world stage as the next diva. Well, that seems to be coming true. Her jazz/soul/hip-hop debut, *Baduism,* has the music industry buzzing. Comprised of a minimalist approached to jazz/soul vocal phrasing and tracks that are at once blunt hip-hop and sophisticated soul swing, the debut could be described as "B-Girl Sings The Blues."



Maxwell

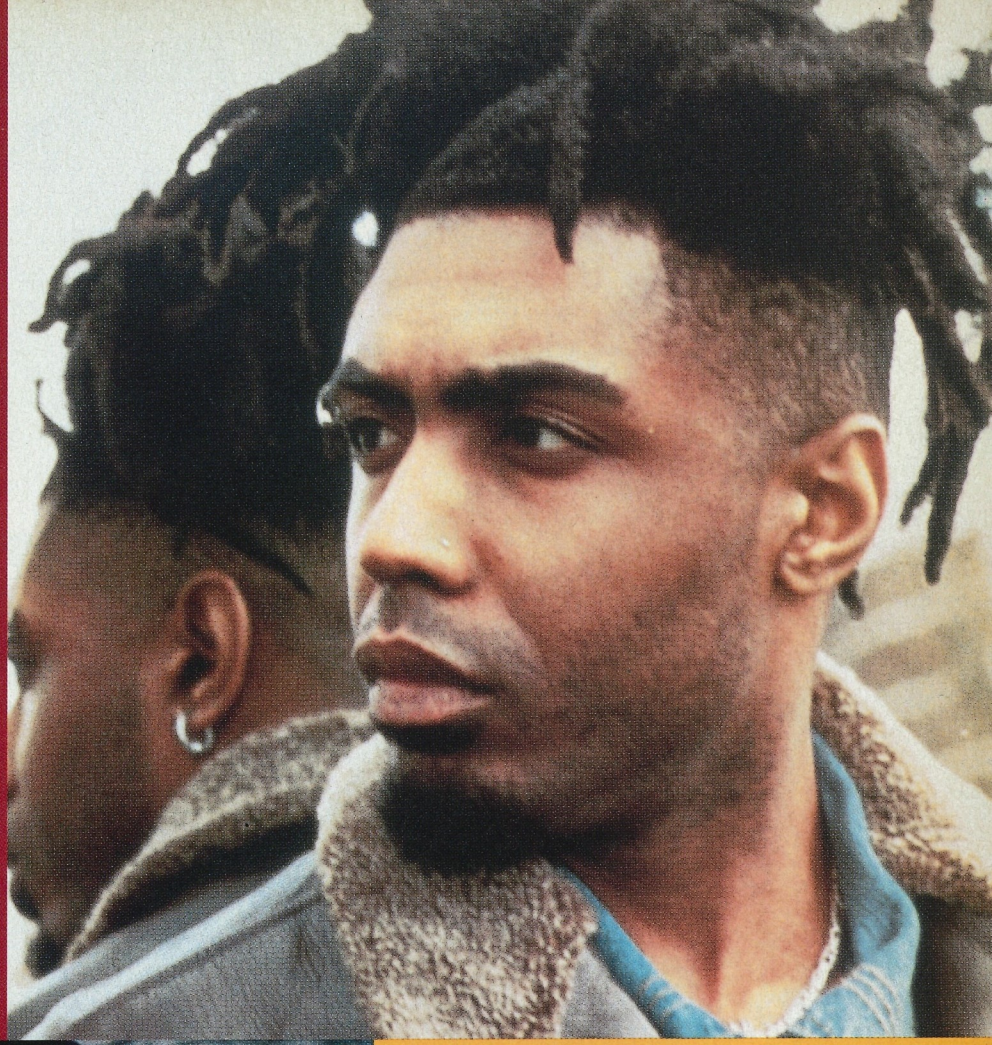
The streets of Brooklyn are anything but soft. The music which dominates: hardcore hip-hop and reggae. The people, like their music, are hard. But as with everything, even in Brooklyn there are exceptions. Born in Brooklyn, Maxwell, the male siren of song, lets on no hint of rough hardness in his stage persona. With the initial release of his debut album, *Urban Hang Suite*, listeners were slow to catch on. But once they did, damn. Kind of picking up where D'Angelo left the ladies last year, Maxwell comes to us with a smooth mix of restrained vocals and ethereal music that is reminiscent of Sade. Definitely into playing the role of the young sex symbol for the ladies, as Maxwell crawls (literally) around the stages of America, so do his records...right up the charts.

Tony Toni Toné

Representing Oakland to the fullest, the Tony's are mostly known for their standard R&B love jones offerings, banging up against competitors like Luther Vandross and Boyz II Men. When their record "It Never Rains In Southern California" hit years ago, it solidified their place in the larger pantheon of R&B superstars. But the popular music of the day has changed, and so have the Tony's, aka Timothy Riley, Raphael Saadiq and D'Wayne Wiggins. We bore witness to a hint of that change via Raphael Saadiq's work with D'Angelo and The Roots last year. Their new album, *House Of Music*, is just that. The set features an arrangement of horns, vocals and pure musicianship that almost transforms them into another group. Old fans may be confused or refreshed, haters who wrote them off as R&B pablum should check for them one mo' time.

Omar

Back in '91, a fever swept all of Europe. The heat was caused by a lush and mellow single entitled "There's Nothing Like This." It's author and singer, Omar Lye-Fook, appeared on MTV Europe in the simple yet rich video of the same name, and promptly stole the hearts of millions of young women. A native of the United Kingdom, Omar is a genuine throwback to many of his American R&B idols of the '60s and '70s in that he is a skilled musician comfortable with over a dozen different instruments. His second album, *Music* (arguably his best), was met with indifference as European critics and fans began the fickle exercise of not listening because Omar was "too confident" or "not hard enough." Imbued with Latin rhythms and a delivery reminiscent of Stevie Wonder, Omar released his first American effort more than a year ago, yet received little exposure. This hasn't deterred him though. A live performer of the first order, Omar continues to tour regularly. If you don't take the time to check this brother out now, believe me, when you run across his stuff ten years later in some underground record store...you're gonna kick your own ass.



JAMIROQUAI/ELLEN VON UNWERTH, OMAR/CA RECORDS

Jamiroquai

Led by 26-year-old Jay Kay, this band is easily one of the most musical, young non-jazz groups around. Jay Kay weaves taunting melodies around the complex rhythms of his instrumentalists in a way that harks back to the disco and funk '70s, but somehow doesn't repeat or rehash the music. It's all fresh. Their debut came in '92 with *Emergency On Planet Earth*, and was steeped, like most of his records, in socio-spiritual philosophy. In Europe, the record hit big, deep messages and all. You may not recognize Jay, but trust, he's sold millions. The follow-up, *Return Of The Space Cowboy*, was no disappointment, even though the critics tried to dis. Now with the release of 1997's *Traveling Without Moving*, Jay and his band are looking like they may finally see some more light here in the States. This is the music that heads will be bumpin' in their space hoopties in the year 2097. Someone once asked me, "what do they sound like?" I said, imagine Rufus & Chaka Khan reincarnated with a white guy who grew up around spiritual roughnecks singing lead. Yeah, that's pretty much it.

MACK DIVAS

WHAT DEMONS LIE BENEATH THE EXCESSIVE GLAM AND THE IN-YO-FACE SEXUALITY? THE SOURCE GETS

Lipstick Traces

"People be acting like me and Lil' Kim are the *Thelma and Louise* of rap music," says Foxy Brown, in a voice as smooth as a zodiac sign black-light poster. Her white limo zooms up Myrtle—aka Murder—Avenue and roars past the monstrous Fort Greene projects, glimmering in the five o'clock twilight shadow of the setting sun. She laughs, flashing an afro-sheen smile, before leaving dark MAC lipstick traces on a mini-bar Sprite bottle. Dressed in her standard high-fashion runway gear, Foxy has the look of a seductive young girl who has been playing in her mother's wardrobe closet in an attempt to look grown. "But Kim is my girl. I went out and bought her record the first day it came out, because we've known each other for awhile. We used to talk on the phone about trying to get a deal and stuff like that. I want us to do a song together, something that would bring the ill na na vibe together with her Queen B style...like a female version of Brooklyn's Finest." And as she slouches in the white leather seat, dialing her mom on the cellular, Foxy flashes me an utterly dazzling smile that sends a heatwave down my spine.

Stopping at a redlight in front of a tattered Chinese take-out joint, with Plexiglas windows and chicken-wing specials, Brooklyn wildboys try to catch a glimpse through the tinted windows, wondering who would be fool enough to be riding in a limo through the 'hood at night. "You think niggas will still

STYLING BY STANLA HELMICH. FOXY'S HAIR BY AVRIL. FOXY'S MAKE-UP BY MARK HALLS FOR MARKS & ASSOC. KIM'S HAIR & MAKE-UP BY LORAINE ARGILES FOR NARS. KIM'S DRESS BY ALEXANDER MCQUEEN.

story by **MICHAEL A. GONZALES** • *photography by* **JORDAN DONER**

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH HIP-HOP'S TWIN TESTAMENTS TO DIVAHOOD: LIL' KIM AND FOXY BROWN.

be out there?" she asks, multicolored paper-thin words drifting towards the gray skies, referring to the autograph signing/in-store that we're heading towards in 'do or die' Bed-Stuy. Forget the fact that Miss Foxy is running over an hour late and the Crooklyn crowd in front of Birdy's record store are shaking like Molotov cocktails ready to explode.

"Last time I spoke with the guy at the store he said there was about two hundred people outside," says the soft-voiced Def Jam rep. Looking excited on this, the second day that her debut album *Ill Na Na* has hit the streets, Foxy's girlish laughter mixes with the pulsing dancehall music that's flowing from the car's speakers. The day before, at an in-store at Sam Goody's in Greenwich Village, damn near two hundred high school kids clutching color posters of their ebony idol, had patiently waited for hours. "I'm *from* Brooklyn," says Foxy, "so I'm not trying to dis, but I feeling this is not going to be as smooth as yesterday."

Unlike their fellow sisters in rhyme, Foxy Brown and Lil' Kim have no desire to be either earth mothers, art & craft girls or blue jean wearing tomboys trying to rock the mike like one of the fellas. Drowning in a sea of style, these supermama's have become stars in the blax-ploitation flick that is hip-hop, a genre more known for its macho posing and skeezer bashing than for sexy feminism. Although at first glance one might try to slot both Foxy Brown and Lil' Kim into the

category marked *Jezebel*, preferring to view them as wet dream teasers rather than serious Black women, their sexualized imagery should be seen as empowering rather negative. Or, as Foxy likes to say, "I think it's every girl's dream to be fly."

Although old-school feminists might try to convince the rap public that the eroticism of these two Black beauties simply feeds the machinery of sexist/racist mythology of the (male) pornographic imagination, two smart young women who just wanna have fun with their cultural icons are behind the black lace curtain—strutting like Tina Turner, blasting niggas like Pam Grier, sashaying like Dorothy Dandridge in *Carmen Jones*, and glowing like Diana.

Big Momma

Wearing a pair of Chanel frames, a multi-colored fur jacket, and high-heeled Gucci boots, Lil' Kim walks into the conference room at Atlantic Records and flops into the chair nearest the door. Removing her glasses, her eyes look tired from too many late nights sitting in airports waiting for the next midnight flight. "Hope you don't might if I eat," she says in a soft voice, pulling a buttered bagel from a wrinkled paperbag. "I just came back from doing BET yesterday," she says. "Then I went into the studio to work on this song for Puffy's album, stayed-up trying to write this song, and I didn't go to sleep until six this morning. After all that my manager called and said the record company wants me to be here at twelve-thirty." Taking a sip of Coke, Lil' Kim looks me straight in the eyes and says, "So if it seems like I have an attitude it's because I'd rather be sleeping." And then she laughs.

With the release of *Hardcore*, Lil Kim's first solo joint since breaking into the game with the Junior M.A.F.I.A. crew last year, this five-foot tall package of black dynamite seems ready to joyfully explode at any moment. Older than Foxy by four years, Kim's life has already been a series of mini-dramas that has taken her from being homeless at the age of 16, roaming the streets of Brooklyn at dawn and crashing with neighborhood dope-boys, to guest hosting on MTV. "I think people who have problems with me are those who can't accept the realness of life. And if you can't accept that, then you haven't gone through what I've gone through, and if you haven't gone through it...then you can't judge me. If you don't know where I've been, how do you know who I am."

Like a character from a ghetto afterschool special directed by Matty Rich (*Bad Times*), Miss Kim has seen enough bullshit to last a lifetime, or at least a few more albums. Staring into those sleepy eyes, I try to get a glance at whatever hopes and fears and visions she might be hiding behind her eyelashes. With a hoarse sadness, Kim's tale of woe begins the day her moms decided to break out without saying anything. "She just left when I was around 8 or 9. I didn't know where she was, so I kind of got stuck with my father," she says. "He and I were cool until I got around 13, then everything started going crazy."

Describing him as a handsome, dark-skinned man with curly hair, Kim's dad had gone through abuse as a child and now seemed determined to transfer his pain to his own children. "My father had a rough life," says Kim, calm as the winds blowing outside the windows. "His sister was the good one and he was the so-called bad one who was always in some mess. He was the darkest one in his family and his mother would say things like, 'Get out of here you black fucker.' He used to take it to heart. He escaped by joining the Army, but when my older brother and me were born, I guess he finally felt like he had somebody that he could bully."

Trying to recall drunken conversations with midnight birds who had their own problems with pop duke, I say, "A few women have told me that when they finally got their periods, their father's attitude changed almost overnight."

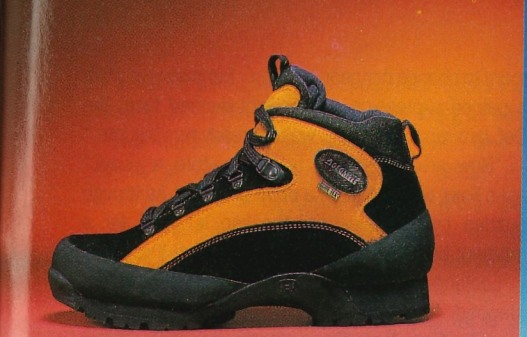
Sucking her teeth and staring toward the ceiling, Kim mumbles, "That's what I don't understand. I got my period when I was ten years old and my father put the pad on me. He showed me how to change it and everything. That's how close we were."

After too many late nights and early mornings of being awaken by a broomstick banging on the headboard or a stinging slap across the face, Kim's brother chose to flee from their Bed-Stuy apartment. "Some people might say he should have stayed to help me out, but he just couldn't take it anymore. He went to live in Virginia, but I was stuck with my father."

As she got older, the battles continued, becoming more violent and intense with each passing day. "One night I just lost it," she recalls. "I was screaming at him, yelling things like, 'I hate you/fuck you/suck my dick you bastard!" Then I stabbed him. It was at that point that I took to the streets. And that's where I survived for eight months, just doing what I had to."

With demons lurking in the shadows, pitbulls growling after midnight, and the stench of evil casting dark clouds above rooftops, the mean, gritty streets of Brooklyn were no place for a young girl to learn about life, but Lil' Kim Jones had to learn to cope with her illtown blues and suffer silently. "I had stopped going to school, because that's the first place that the cops would come looking for runaways. I was staying with random guys, and taking drugs out of state in order to make money. But then I fucked-up and ran into my brother in the mall. Some kind of way he convinced me to call my father, who invited me to come home."

KIM'S DRESS BY PACO RABANNE



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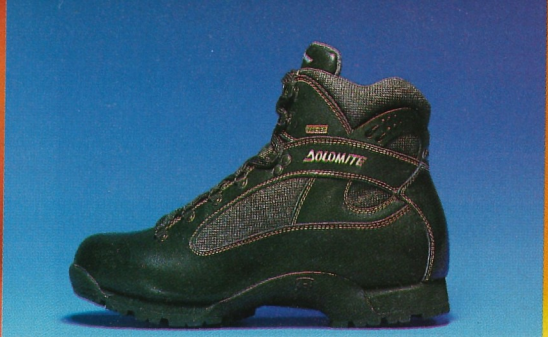

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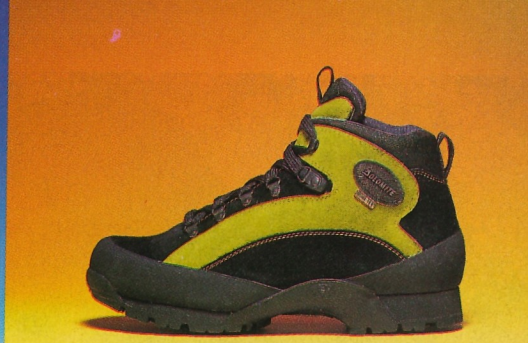

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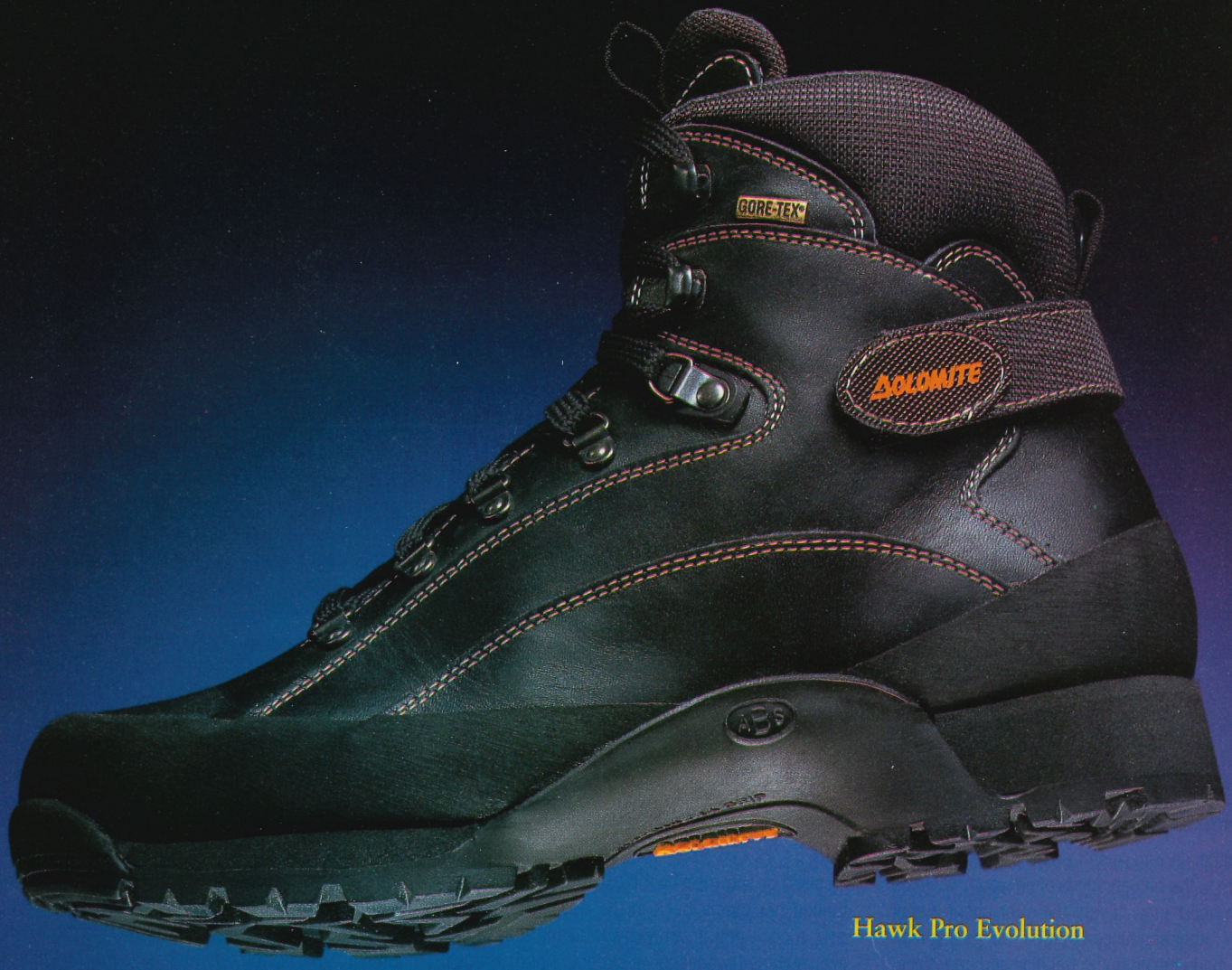
The Hawk Has Landed!



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Yet, although Kim wasn't aware of it at the time, her return to the battlegrounds of her youth would be a hellish short stay. "I was there for about a year when my father announced that he was getting married. He made me go to the wedding and everything, but a few weeks later he told me that he was moving to New Jersey and that I couldn't come."

It was after being bounced back to the streets that Kim hooked-up with Biggie. "He was a good friend of my brother," she recalls. "One night I asked if I could stay at his house, because I had no where to go. At first he said 'no,' but he changed his mind. We didn't have sex or anything. We just smoked weed and watched movies. His moms had made some dope food that night, too."

Ill Na Na

Inspired by the retro-cool blaxploitation films that thrilled her moms back in the day when movies cost a buck and a *rap* was something that brothers mumbled whenever a cutie trooped through the block wearing skin-tight Lee's and tube tops, Foxy Brown is gazing out of the window of the town car speeding up Sixth Avenue looking for a nail salon. "Pam Grier was the ultimate bitch back then," she says. "The girl was beautiful, sexy and positive, but she didn't take any shit. I think every woman has a little Foxy in them."

Although the in-store officially began five minutes ago, Foxy ain't hardly ready: first she has too get her nails painted, then she must go back to her hotel room to change her gear and apply her make-up. With a pained expression on her light-skinned face, the Def Jam rep says, "Foxy, we're already running late."

"How are we getting to the in-store anyway?" asks Foxy, with the air of a noire princess. As though puzzled by the question, the rep is quiet for a moment before answering. "We're taking this car."

Looking stunned, as though someone had just slapped her with a tacky pocketbook full of poverty, Foxy flips like a ghetto gymnast. "What are you talking about?" she says, raising her voice as though insulted by the suggestion. "You've got to be kidding. Would Def Jam have Method Man or LL Cool J going to an in-store in a town car. I want you to get Lyor [Def Jam's president] on the phone right now." Moments later, after Lyor has approved the upgrade, the town car stops on the corner of 8th Avenue and 22nd Street, and Foxy makes a mad dash to the nail joint.

In comparison to Lil' Kim, one might be tempted to say that Foxy Brown's life has been a pampered one of loving parents and few obstacles in her path. "My life was pretty normal," she says, as the sandy blonde Russian begins working on her hands with the precision of a diamond cutter. "Me and my moms are best friends. We've been through our own mother/daughter drama, but she was always there when no one else was. My father doesn't live with us, but he and I have always been mad cool. I was talking to him the other day and he was telling me how pretty he thought I looked in my video."

Growing up in Park Slope, Brooklyn, Foxy's earliest hip-hop memory is blasting Salt & Pepa's eighties jam "Tramp," and cranking the stereo to eleven. "Me and my girlfriend Mia used to dress like them and do little shows for our parents." But nothing could have prepared her for the combination of good and evil that would explode on the hip-hop scene after doing her first collaboration on LL's "I Shot Ya," released last year. Following-up with Case's catchy "Touch Me, Tease Me," and Jay Z's "Ain't No Nigga," fools started dissing like a beautiful woman on the mic would be the death of rap. From Jeru's dis on "One Day" ("Jeru doesn't even exist in my mind," she snaps), to some of her older sistas in the hip-hop game who have been throwing shade her way ("If you ask me they need to rock old school instead of old fashion," she purrs), so-called professional rappers were acting as though the *only* brand of rap was their own.

Flashing the massive diamond ring that her boo Kurupt from the Dogg Pound gave her, Foxy says, "At first I was a little hurt by the criticism that I was getting. I pulled my manager to the side when it started, because my feelings were a little crushed. I don't want to say any names, but I thought there would be more sisterhood. Latifah shows me love, and Salt 'n Pepa are like my big sisters, but there's a lot of haters out there." And as she takes a crisp ten-dollar bill from her wallet to pay for her polish job, Foxy says, "I feel like on my album I have grown as a lyricist, because I'm learning everyday." Yet, although she might be growing as a writer, five tracks on the *Ill Na Na* disc are credited

FOXY'S DRESS BY MISSONI

to S. Carter a.k.a. Jay-Z, and speculation exists that Nas and others have been helping her along as well.

Two hours into the future and the white limo is almost at Birdy's Records. "What about the Firm?" I ask, referring to the rap super-group that features her pals Nas, AZ and Cormega. In a voice that's getting more raspy the later it becomes, she replies, "We have about two or three songs so far. The main problem is the fact that we're all solo artists, so it might take a little time. When we're together it's lethal. When I was recording my solo stuff it was alright, but when I'm doing Firm tracks I become mad hyped."

And as the car pulls into the block that is Nostrand and New York Avenue, the roar of the crowd reaches us at the corner. Still in the car, Foxy looks a little nervous as the her fans surround the car screaming her name as though she were one of The Beatles. Standing Timberland tall from the side of a rusty lamp-post, one fan yells, "*I just want to marry you Foxy!*" Another punches one of the uniformed cops in the face after he's been pushed. Opening the door slowly, her bodyguard Big Shawn zips her out of the car and into the store.

Spend a Little Doe

Two days later and I'm with Lil' Kim in her suite at the Doubletree Hotel in Washington, D.C. She's sitting on the couch surrounded by stacks of glossy magazines that include *Elle*, *Woman's Wear* and the latest *Vogue*, and lounging in a red long-sleeved Hilfiger T-shirt and matching mans. Although she no longer looks like a glam Black extra from an Aaron Spelling soap opera, Kim is still a cutie. Even without all of the make-up.

Sitting with her legs folded in a yoga position, Kim comes straight out and says, "I hope you're not going to be another writer asking me about Faith, because I'm tired of talking about that stuff."

Lighting a Newport, I ask, "What other stuff are you tired of?"

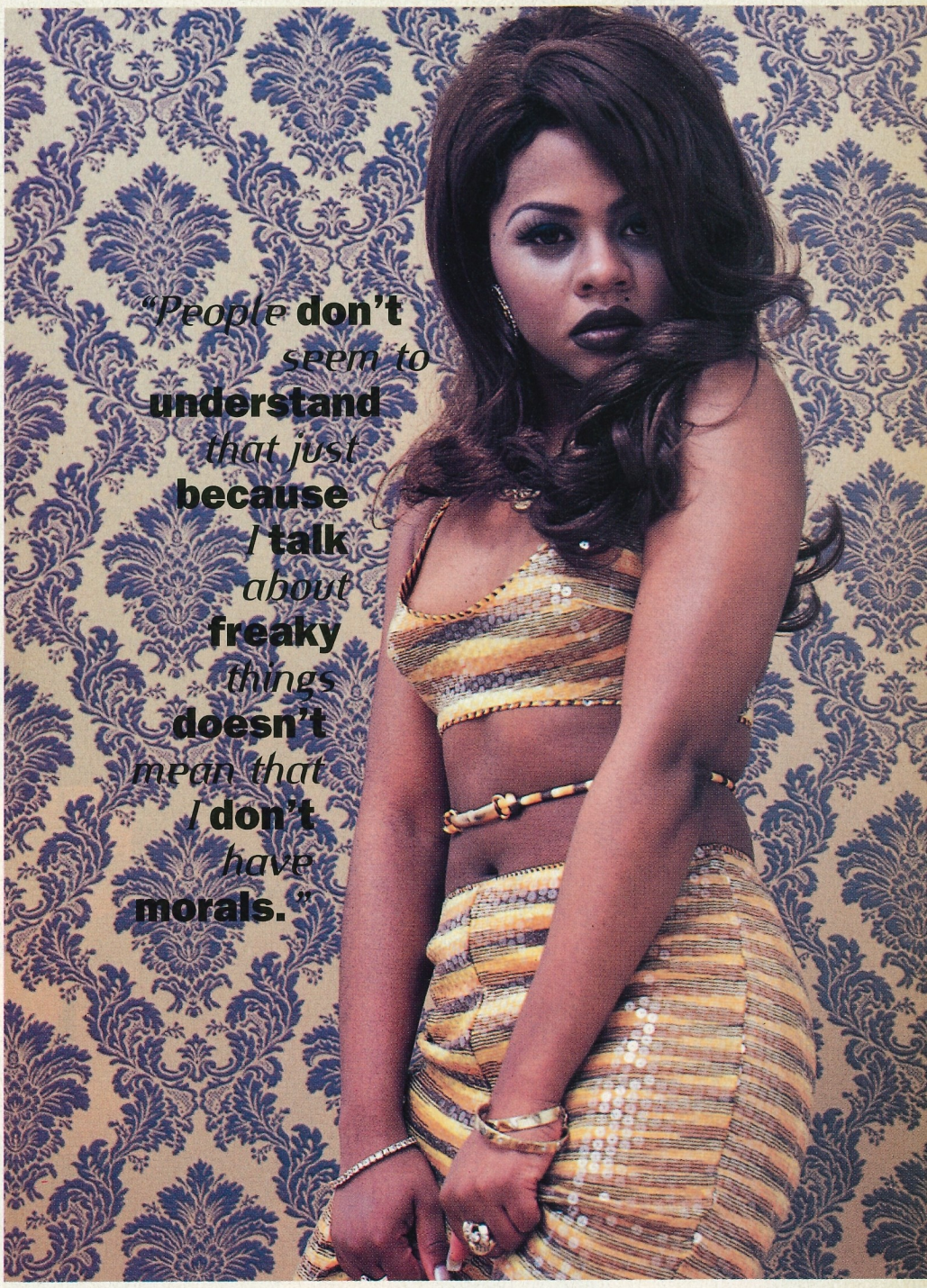
"Well," she replies, "I'm getting tired of writers who just want to write about the freaky stuff, as though that was the only side of my personality that mattered. I think I'm a smart girl, but you wouldn't know it from the stories that always come out."

Not long after her drama with her father, Kim decided that she was tired of living the street life and decided it was time to get her self together. "I finally figured out that no one was going to help me, but me. I knew what I wanted out of life, I just had to figure out how to get it."

Going back to school, Kim enrolled as a psychology major at a local community college, where she was thrilled to discover the works of Sigmund Freud. "That was one class where I always did well. I think of myself as a very visual person, and so was Freud. Just the way he would analyze people's dreams. I remember one that was about snakes and horses."

"Did you graduate?"

"Nah," she says, sounding disappointed. "It was a two year school, but I had only gone for a year and a half. That was around the time that this music thing started happening."



Yet, after the release of Junior M.A.F.I.A.'s album and *Hardcore*, the ghetto gossips (i.e. Wendy Williams/Hot 97) and muckrakers were trying to drag her name though the muddy streets. "I have friends who shoplift, but that's not my thing. Hell, I *wish* I knew how to steal."

"But what about the porn movie stuff?"

Sucking her teeth, she says, "People don't seem to understand that just because I talk about freaky things doesn't mean that I don't have morals. I might make a movie showing my ass and tits, but I want to be on some Jada Pinkett stuff. Not porn."

Of course, like exotic cocktails master-mixed with stylish beauty and chocolate sexuality, music was never the real reason that most of their adoring fans were attracted to them. Yet, beyond the lustful magnetism Lil' Kim and Foxy possess, their lyrics are manifestos of a new age of womanhood that is simultaneously street and chic.

Looking at my Mickey Mouse watch, I notice that it's about 1:40 in the morning. Talking to Kim is like rapping with the little sister I never had. "Do you have any resolutions for the new year?"

Giving me a curious glance, Kim smiles widely, saying, "Yeah. I think I want to try to go to church more often. The year that it took to make *Hardcore* was one of the longest, most stressful in my life. I was having family and personal problems on top of everything else. If it wasn't for God, I don't think I would have made it." S

KIM'S OUTFIT BY MISSONI

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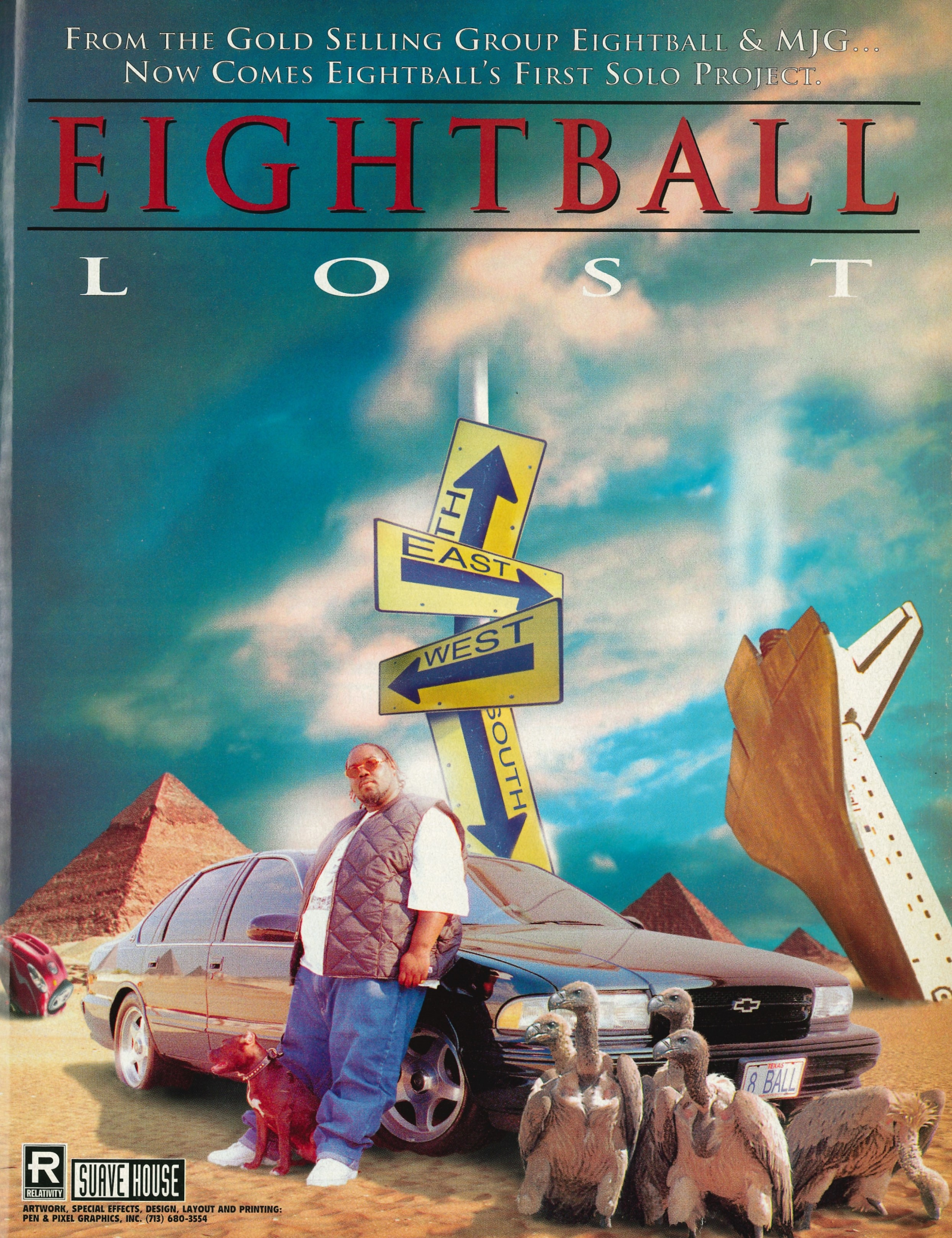
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Street Ball

AFTER A LEAGUE-LOW 18 WINS LAST YEAR, THE PHILADELPHIA 76ERS ARE TRYING TO FIGURE A WAY OUT OF THE CELLAR. COULD ALLEN IVERSON BE THE ANSWER?

BY D.L. CUMMINGS

Thug life is alive in the NBA. It's present in Philadelphia, where the city of Brotherly Love has Allen Iverson representing the Hip-Hop Nation on a nightly basis. Forget about Kobe, Marcus, Ray, Shareef and anybody else who got picked in the first round of the 1996 NBA draft. The Answer is in Philly.

He's teamed up with Jerry Stackhouse and Derrick Coleman, giving the Philadelphia 76ers three card-carrying members of the Hip-Hop Nation. For the next couple of years they will be coming to an NBA town near you, and you have to check them out because they know the streets, lived the streets and are definitely some street heads.

"We know we're young, but we have as good a shot as anybody else in this league to win," said Iverson, a native of Hampton, Virginia, who began his NBA career by dropping 30 in his first game against the Milwaukee Bucks. (Jordan got only 16 in his first professional start.)

"We put five people at a time on the floor like every other team and we believe in ourselves," Iverson continued. "I feel like I have something for somebody every night. I'm still learning, but that doesn't mean I don't think I belong. Things are coming along the way I want. I'm still learning and that's the most important thing. As long as I keep learning from game to game, I will be accomplishing what I want."

If Iverson sounds confident, it's because he is. Confidence is something Allen Iverson has never lacked. This is a 21-year-old who says he likes to hang out in New York and someday wants to meet superfine actress Halle Berry. He even had the balls to let Michael Jordan know he can handle anything on the court after MJ tried to give him some advice when the two played against each other for the first time this season.

Scottie Pippen and Dennis Rodman were messing with Iverson the whole game, telling him he shot too much and didn't play team ball. By the end of the third quarter, Bubba Chuck (Iverson's original nickname) had had enough. When he drew a foul on Rodman on a drive in the lane, Iverson didn't like the way the Worm wiggled. He told him so and after a brief argument, Jordan stepped between the two and told the diminutive Iverson to cool out. Iverson let Jordan know he was fine. "Get outta my face," he told the legend.

This was in front of a packed house at the United Center on the same night the Bulls received their 1996 NBA Championship rings and raised their fourth banner in the last six years. But Jordan understood where Iverson was coming from. Being a superstar rookie himself back in 1984, he knows where the underground railroad of resentment in the league can lead.

"He's got to realize guys are going to try to get him upset," his Airness said of the altercation. "He's a young player with a lot hype, people are going to come after him every night. I was telling him he has to know that and be above it."

When Jordan speaks, people listen. And in this case, he was giving Iverson the peace sign, letting a couple of reporters know the skinny little point guard has game. Iverson's quickness is something the NBA has not seen. He can get up and down the court faster than any player in the league. His jumper is consistent enough that it has to be respected, which allows him to show his ability to penetrate. But what separates him from most, is Iverson's stamina.

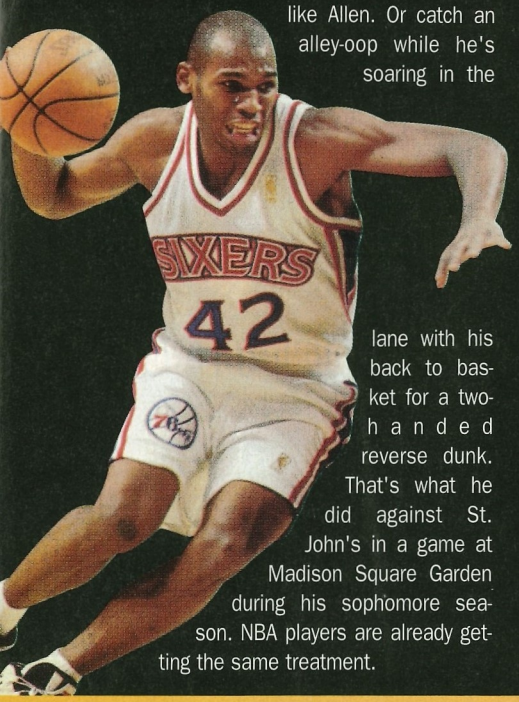
"The boy can run all day," Georgetown coach John Thompson said. "God has given Allen a lot of athletic ability, but he has unbelievable stamina."

As of now, the only downfall in Iverson's game is in half-court defense, where big guards like the Bulls' 6-6 Ron Harper will try to post up the 6-foot Iverson as much as possible. "That's something teams are going to try and I will just have to adjust to it," said Iverson, who was a good enough defen-

NATHANIEL S. BUTLER/NBA PHOTO

sive player in college to be named the Big East's defensive player of the year twice. "That's what they will try and do and it's my job to figure out a way to get around it."

In a lot of ways, Iverson is a '90s version of Isiah Thomas. Except Isiah couldn't take off from the dotted line and throw it down like Allen. Or catch an alley-oop while he's soaring in the



lane with his back to basket for a two-handed reverse dunk. That's what he did against St. John's in a game at Madison Square Garden during his sophomore season. NBA players are already getting the same treatment.

Teamed with Jerry Stackhouse and Derrick Coleman, Allen Iverson gives the Philadephia 76ers three card-carrying members of the Hip-Hop Nation

"The boy can play, no doubt about that," is how Jordan described Iverson to *Washington Post* columnist, Mike Wilbon. Jordan also explained to Wilbon that the power of his pen may be what Iverson needs. "You better talk to him through the paper," Mike told the other Mike, who happens to be the Jordan of sports writers. "I tried," Jordan added, with his customary smirk and arch eyebrow scowl. "And he didn't want to listen. But he has to understand, he's making all this money, got all these endorsements and people are jealous. He has to learn how to keep his focus every night." On and off the court.

Since Philadelphia made him the number one pick in the draft, Iverson has gone flat out mad. The first thing he did was sign with super-agent David Falk. If you don't know who Falk is, don't worry because you don't have to ask anybody. He only has Jordan, Patrick Ewing, Alonzo Mourning, Juwan Howard, Kenny Anderson and Dikembe Mutombo in his stable. There's a reason, actually many reasons, Falk is successful.

Iverson found out immediately after becoming the first underclassman in two decades to leave Thompson's Georgetown program early, when he got $50 mil from Reebok before Nike could swoosh its way into the sweepstakes. Later, Iverson signed with Philly for $2 million a season. If it wasn't for the NBA rookie salary cap, it would be much higher. Expect those digits to soar to $8 to $10 million a year when Iverson signs his next contract.

Still, with all the money, comes responsibility. And it's obvious Iverson still has to figure that out. His lifestyle off the court already has the league on alert. The head of the class of the '96 NBA draft, Iverson's name appeared on the league's police blotter at least three times before the season started. League officials are not happy with Iverson's entourage, either.

It's common knowledge by now that one of Iverson's cars was shot up. No, he wasn't in it. He wasn't anywhere around. Also, he and his boys acted like true hip-hoppers in DC, when they stepped to Juwan Howard's party during Black Caucus Weekend in Mobb Deep fashion, wearing Timberlands and Karl Kani gear for a function that required the Esquire look of suits, jackets and slacks. And don't forget, all of this was after Iverson blew off the last three days of the NBA's rookie orientation week. The league takes rookie week very seriously. It's the one opportunity it has to work with its future stars and prepare them for NBA life.

No wonder, when 76ers team president Pat Croce saw some of Iverson's boys on the street one night, he stepped to them and, according to Croce, told them, "Yo homies, I know you all are tight with Allen. But I want to let you know if any of you get into any trouble and it gets back to Allen, I'm going to burn all of your houses down."

Croce, a former fitness trainer who turned his millions into a wad big enough to get him part ownership of the Sixers, runs the team like he's working out on a Stairmaster with steroids in his system. His style is wild, but to the point. "Fuck with something that's important to me, and I'm going to get you."

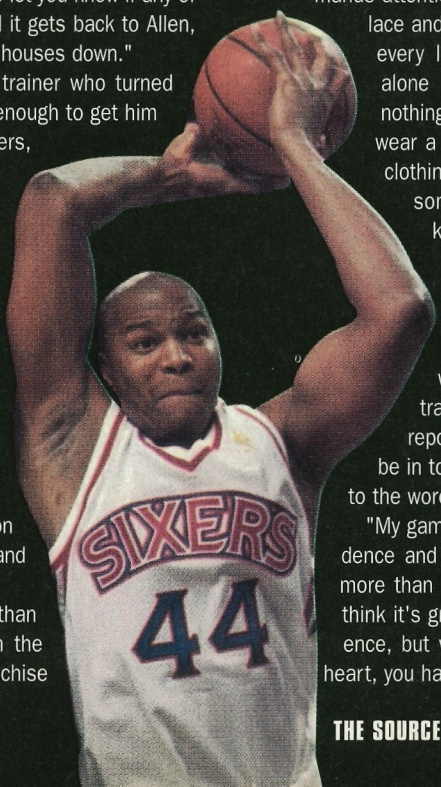
To his credit, Iverson was not amused by his boss's actions. "I take it personally because I've worked to hard to get where I am," Iverson said. "But Pat and I talked and everything is cool."

It's going to take more than Iverson's hard work to turn the 76ers around. This is a franchise

that hasn't seen the playoffs since 1991, and won a grand total of 42 games over the last two seasons. Philly's 18-64 record last year is the reason it had the chance to get Iverson. And though the 76ers are probably not going to be that good this season, the team will be exciting. Stackhouse has game like that and Coleman's got attitude like that, but Iverson possesses both, which means he may be the solution to Philly's recent problems. They don't call him "The Answer" for nothing.

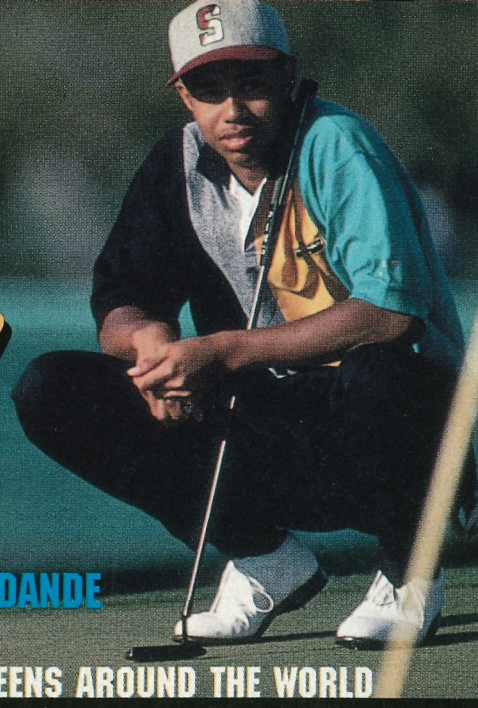
"You can definitely tell he's going to be a great player," said Jordan. "He can do everything, but right now, similar to what I had to go through as a younger player, he has to learn how to adjust to his teammates and make them better. When he figures out how to blend his individual talent with his teammates, he will be much better. That will come in time."

Iverson believes it will happen sooner rather than later. A point guard with a scorer's mentality, Iverson's taken over the team like he did as a sophomore at Georgetown, where he was a first-team All-American. In the locker room, he commands attention. His matching gold necklace and bracelet have diamonds in every link. He said the necklace alone cost $20,000. But that's nothing, especially when you can wear a T-shirt promoting your own clothing line. Which Iverson does sometimes, letting people know about "3-Ball Gear." Still, in the locker room it's clear Iverson is a born leader. Whether he's asking Coleman about the whereabouts of the team trainer or holding court with reporters, Iverson appears to be in total control. It all goes back to the word confidence.



"My game is patterned on my confidence and my heart. I play with that more than anything else," he said. "I think it's great to have a lot of experience, but with no confidence and no heart, you have nothing." S

AP/WIDEWORLD



The Money Green

BY J.A. ADANDE

GOLF'S TIGER WOODS IS PUTTING THE FIRE BACK INTO PUTTING GREENS AROUND THE WORLD

Twenty-one-year-old golf phenomenon Tiger Woods is off to the best start ever made by a rookie. He won an unprecedented double tournament in his first seven starts and has moved himself way up on golf's money list. No wonder they haven't been allowing Black golfers in the country clubs all these years!

I knew something was different when my Mom got excited. "*You're* going to see Tiger Woods?!" Moms doesn't care too much about sports and she probably can't name another golfer. Most of the sports I cover slide by her without much interest, but when she found out I was off to watch Tiger Woods try to win his first tournament as a professional, she was hyped.

That's the kind of effect Woods has on people. Young, old, Black, white. Doesn't matter. They all love the kid. I have to admit, I was never too high on golf. Then I went to a golf school this summer, about 10 miles from Atlantic City, and now I'm hooked. Of course, it happened to be the week after Woods turned pro, so you know that's all everyone talked about. How to hit the ball like Tiger Woods, how to lean on your club and look cool on the putting green while you're waiting your turn like Tiger Woods. And, in a truly dream world, how to get *paid* like Tiger Woods ($40 million to sport Nike gear? Damn.).

But nothing prepared me for the Tiger-mania I saw when I got to Moline, Illinois, site of the Quad Cities Classic. "We're all rooting for him," said the nice, elderly man who drove me to get my press pass. "If he wins, it'll be a big boost for the tournament."

Just by taking the lead into the final round, it *was* a big boost. Reporters from around the country were there, and more than 30,000 spectators showed up at the Oakwood Country Club. Woods didn't win that one, but he won the Las Vegas Invitational three weeks later. And to prove that wasn't a fluke, he won the Walt Disney World tournament in Orlando in October.

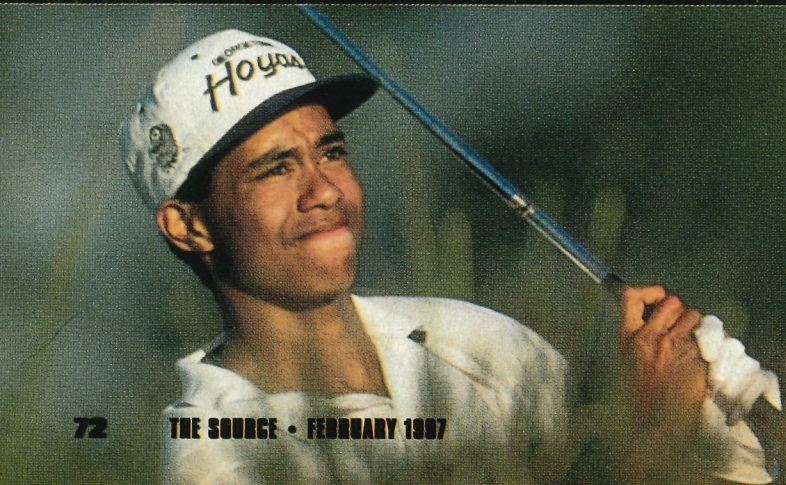
Woods had a total of five top-five finishes among his first eight tournaments as a professional, helping him to finish 24th on the PGA Tour money list with $790,594 in earnings. And his 21st birthday wasn't until December.

When he turned pro in August (after winning a record three consecutive U.S. Amateur titles), Woods became the talk of the tour. Everywhere he went, the scene was similar to what I saw in Moline. Fans crowded around the practice putting green, drawn by just the sight of his signature blue golf bag with a tiger's head club cover on his driver. By the time he came out to take a few warm-up putts, fans were lined up two-deep.

When Woods tees off, he drives the ball so far (up to 350 yards) that the crowd starts "ooing" and "ahhing." Some find his monster drives so ridiculously long that they can only laugh. Fans shout encouragement all the way up the fairway as he walks toward the hole.

At the 10th hole, a mother, mindful of golf's etiquette, quickly covered up the mouth of her little boy who kept trying to shout, "Way to go, Tiger!" as he prepared to putt. Woods loves the support, especially from the kids. But you can tell that some of the other PGA Tour veterans are jealous of all the attention he receives, not to mention the huge endorsement money. They all know, however, that he's good for the sport. He's bringing in new fans, especially minorities and women (female friends of mine tell me they adore Woods).

The TV ratings will go up. The sponsorship dollars will go up. More cash all the way around. And what about the money-maker? I kept looking at Woods' face and his serious expression, trying to figure out who he resembled. Then it hit me, Arthur Ashe. I know he'll get compared to Ashe often enough in many other ways, and that's not fair. No one could be expected to live up to Ashe's incredible, groundbreaking standards. But if Woods keeps on keepin' on, showing it's cool for Black kids to play golf and it's cool for country clubs to let Black folks play on their courses, he'll be creating a legacy of his own.



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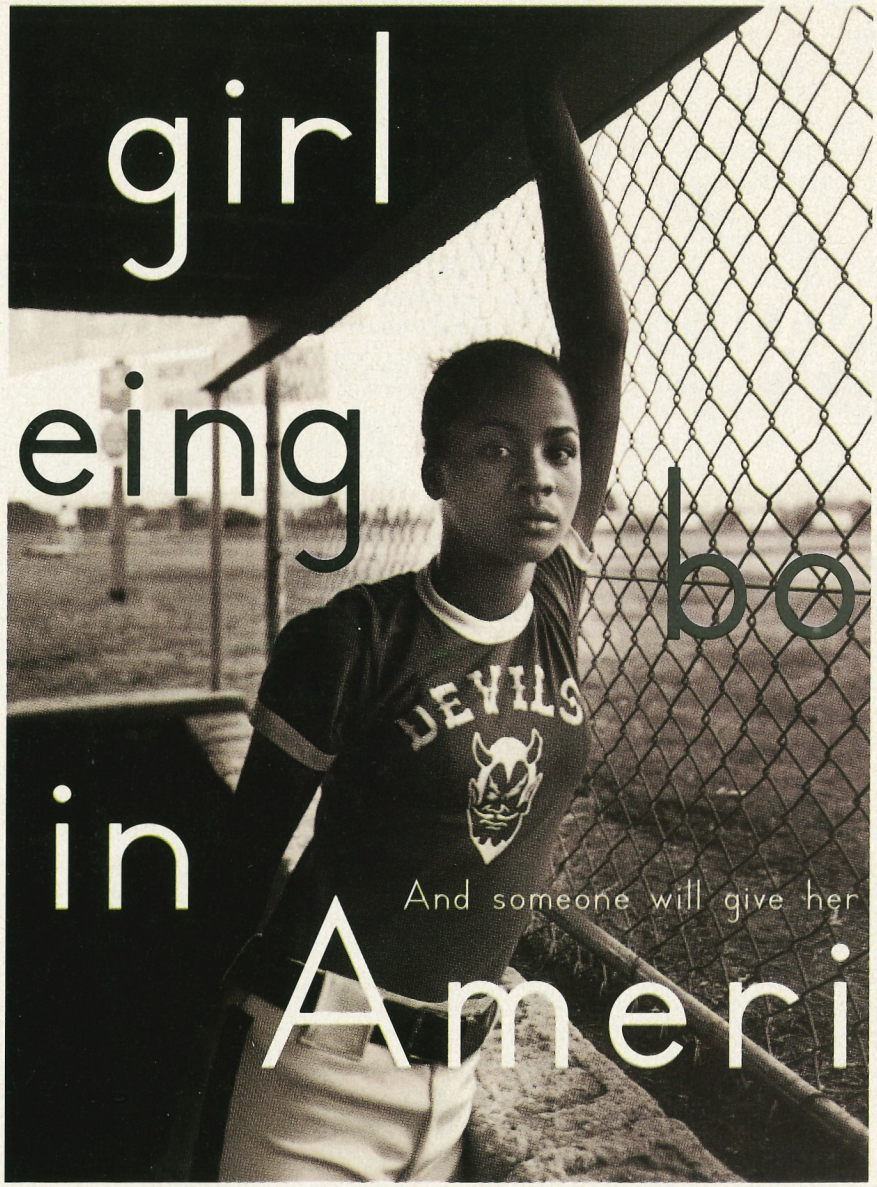

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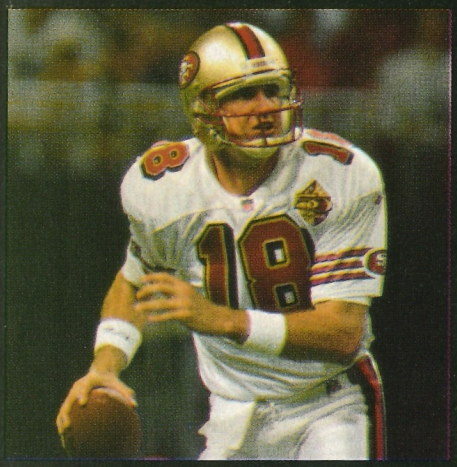
THE RAP ON SPORTS

Alright, so we took a month off for the year-end issue, but when we last left you we had done a college b-ball preview. So some clown, presumably from Ohio, called to scream on me about the **Bearcats**. He's a little pissed that we had Cincinnati ranked 6th when, according to him, "everybody knows Cincinnati is the squad." Yes, a lot of pre-season polls had them at #1 and they're even favored to win the National Championship, but how often are those polls right come the end of the tourney? He also had a problem with Villanova being #1. But the real issue, Mr. Cincinnati man, is that had you *read* the intro instead of just looking at the pictures, you would have read that our rankings were based solely on the *incoming freshmen*,

CINCINNATI BEARCATS

and not necessarily what the whole team can do. So if you think your Juco guy can see **Tim Thomas**, then maybe you're not a basketball fan. By the way, if you call me back we can look into that free subscription you asked for...**Willie Brown**—that sounds like an athlete's name, but in this case it's a mayor. The mayor of San Francisco to be exact. After the 49ers' embarrassing 20-17 loss to the Cowboys, Brown called backup QB **Elvis Grbac**, "an embarrassment to humankind." He went on to say how he wasn't going to back the construction of any new stadium if Elvis was gonna be playing. Fans showed up the following week with 'Elvis for Mayor' signs...Recently the NBA sent a letter to **Allen Iverson** that basically said, "your shorts are too long, your black ankle braces are too high and cover up too much of your white socks, and your deadly crossover that got you into the NBA is illegal." What's a brother to do? He showed up for the next game with shorter shorts and white ankle braces, but he still got whistled for palming three times.



TIME OUT

IT WAS AN EVENING OF CHICKEN FINGERS AND FRENCH FRIES AS NEW JERSEY NETS GUARD KENDALL GILL RELAXED WITH THE BAD GIRL OF HIP-HOP, LIL' KIM.

LIL' KIM: I've only been here five minutes and I've already got your T-shirt on.

KENDALL: Yeah, and you've got your shoes on my bed... So, I hear you're making a porno movie?

LK: That was a rumor. I am doing a movie about my life though. I hate to disappoint you. There might be some sexual scenes that *might* be played by me.

KG: Why do you like outfits like Chanel, unlike most hip-hoppers with the jeans and the street gear?

LK: For me, a lot of expensive designer lines cater to petite women. I'm very small. Chanel, Moschino, Dolce & Gabbana, Versace, they fit me as if they were made for me. Plus if you buy expensive clothes, you won't see too many other people in your stuff. Do you have a girlfriend?

KG: Yes.

LK: That's nice. Is your relationship very sexual?

KG: When I'm into something I do it very hard. I love hard, I play hard, I dress hard. By saying that I love hard, that means not just sex. I do the whole gamut. You know what I mean?

LK: That's how relationships are supposed to be, to be happy all the time. How did you start playing ball?

KG: I hated basketball at first.

LK: What?

KG: But the basketball courts were where all the girls were. That's how I really got started playing. I started hanging out over there and I got good at it. Who's your boyfriend?

LK: I don't have one.

KG: 'Cause you scare everybody away?

LK: Actually, they scare me away.

KG: Sitting here talking to you, that's hard to believe .

LK: A lot of men that I've dated are really jealous. It doesn't work. Especially mixing business with pleasure. It doesn't work.

KG: So, you don't date anybody in the industry?

LK: No, not anymore.

KG: Let me have some of your fries.

LK: Of course.

KG: This East coast/West coast thing. Personally, I think it's a bunch of bullshit. What do you think about it?

LK: It's unfortunate that it had to take Tupac's death for everyone to realize that we need more unity in rap. The industry period. All the people that are trying to come out rappin'...they're not going to have a chance in '97/'98 if we don't end this now and come together as one. With people like Calvin Butts and C. Delores Tucker trying to shut us down, it gives them better things to say to prove their point. We should come together and do good things and make positive music together on one album, like an hour long.

KG: So, you're all for it?

LK: I'm all for it. A big shout out to Tupac—rest in peace. What do you think of rap? Are you a big fan of rap?

KG: Yeah, I'm a big fan of rap. What I don't like is when brothas call sistas 'bitches and hoes'. I really don't like that.

LK: What's your favorite rap song?

KG: "Jack the Ripper" by LL Cool J.

LK: Say, word! Get outta here. I like that song.

KG: LL is my man. I love LL. I like a lot of the ol' school guys, 'cause they're about my age. That's who I grew up with. So, what does big mama do when she's at home all by herself? When she puts Lil' Kim up, what does she do?

LK: A lot of things.

KG: Besides having sex?

LK: Oooooh, that was on *your* mind.

KG: Uh, uh, it just popped into my mind.

LK: That could be one of the things. That's what a lot of people do when they're at home.

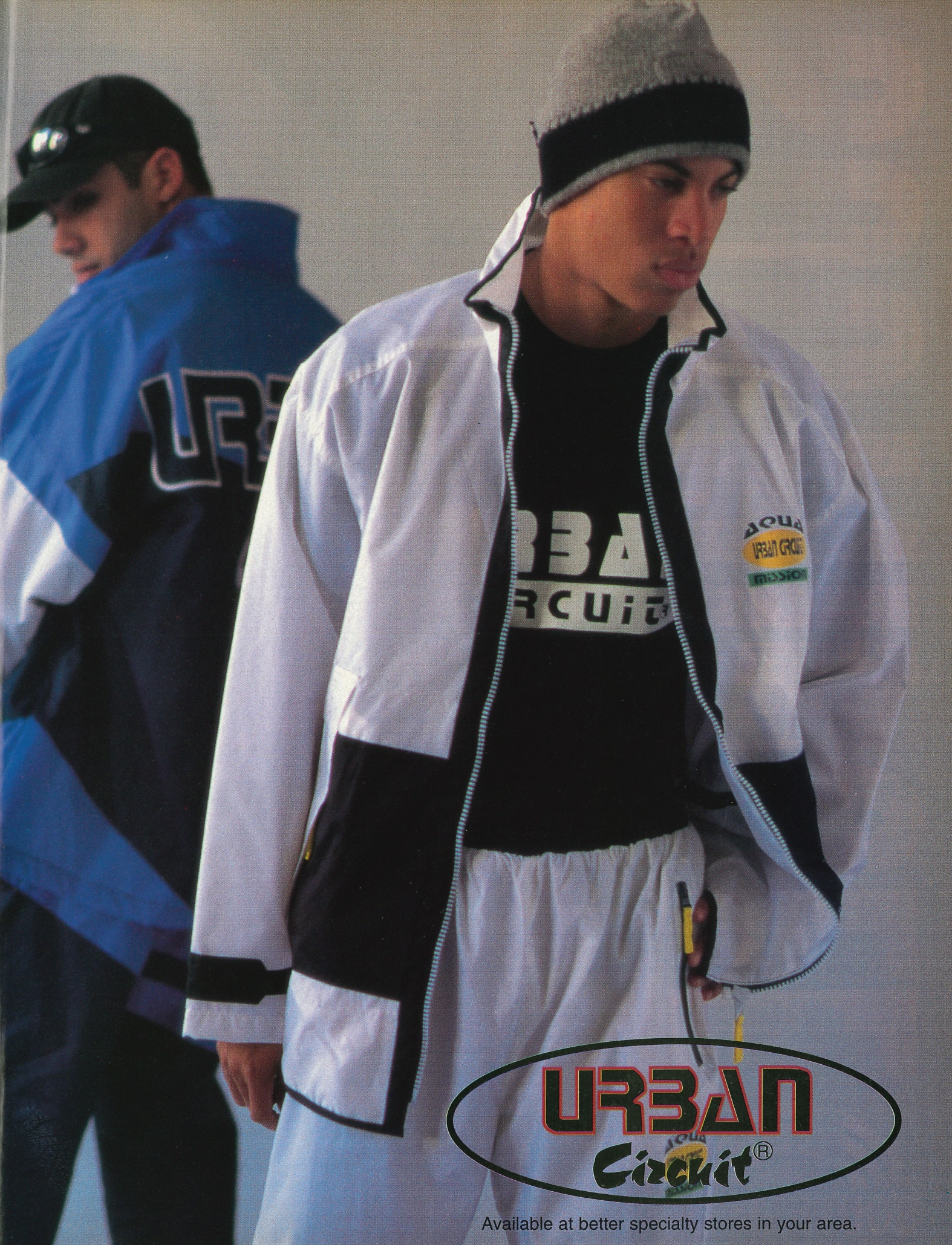
KG: So, on all your off time you're at home having sex?

LK: Uh, uh, only five days out of the week. A lot of times I'm at home by myself listening to music.

KG: What if God doesn't have sex in heaven? Whatcha gonna do?

LK: Do it myself!

ELVIS GRBAC/AP-WIDEWORLD. LIL' KIM & KENDALL GILL/APRIL FERRI



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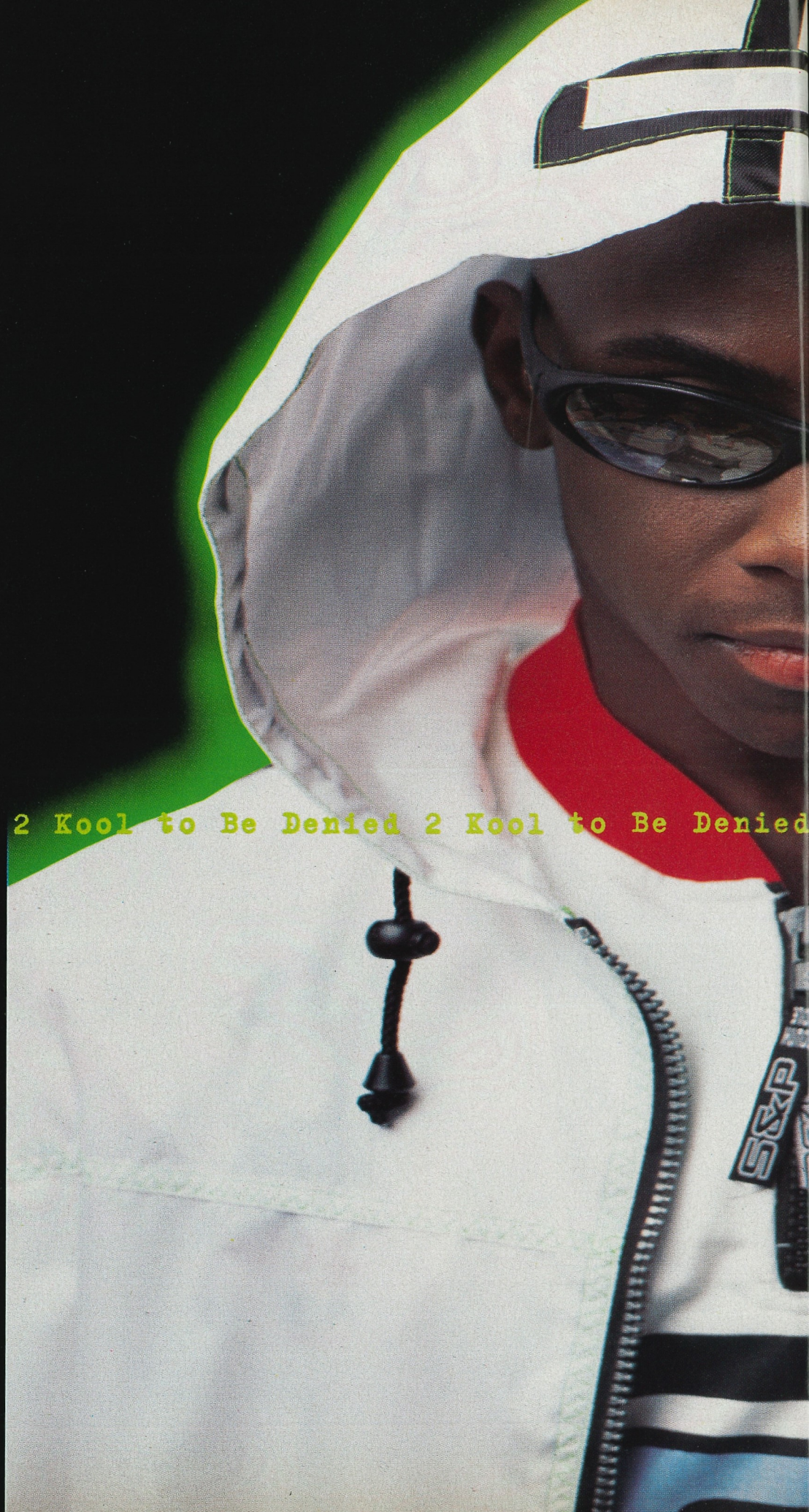

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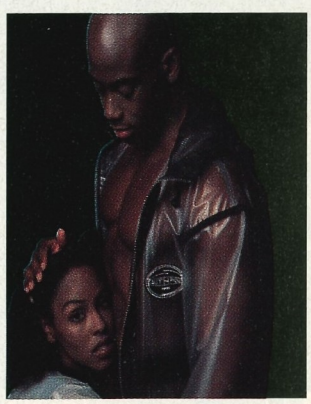

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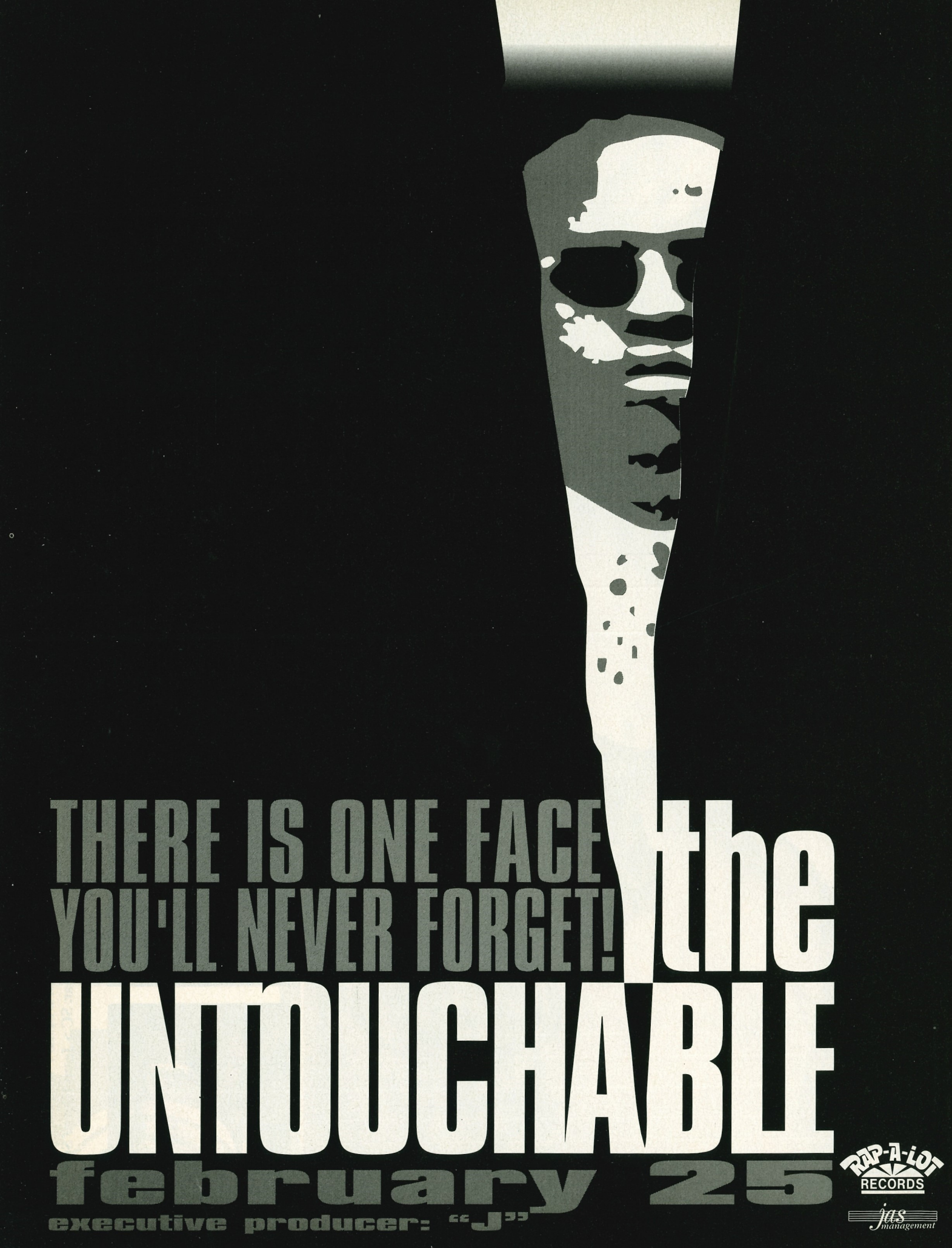
THERE IS ONE FACE
YOU'LL NEVER FORGET!
the
UNTOUCHABLE
february 25
executive producer: "J"
RAP-A-LOT
RECORDS
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management

REDMAN

Muddy Waters

Def Jam

Production: Erick Sermon, Redman, Pras and Rockwilder

Def Squad lion Redman has no problem blazing up the path between mainstream and the underground with his third Reggie Noble vs. alter ego installment, *Muddy Waters.* Slightly lodging the effort between the musical/lyrical cohesiveness of 1992's *Whut? Thee Album,* and the rhyme inventiveness of 1994's *Dare Iz a Darkside,* Redman comes to groove with the masses, but he'll be damned if it's easily digestible for everyone.

This fascination with forging new lyrical horizons left many fans baffled and disillusioned when Red zoomed spaceward with the gold-selling *Dare Iz a Darkside.* Aside from the consistently gloomy, over-stripped arrangements and cryptic space talk, Red took the path of Mothership pioneers Sun Ra and George Clinton, switching his style in defiance of complacency. The steady, bubbling syncopation on *Whut?* flipped to a furious flow of hazy metaphors and punchlines, best demonstrated on cuts like "Da Journee," "Cosmic Slop" and "Green Island." Passionate about strictly taking the underground to new heights, Red publicly forewarned that *Darkside* wasn't made for everyone, especially the radio. Now how many rappers can do that shit and still sell units?

Waters continues in the same expansive vein, coming down a notch on the comprehensibility meter in order to deal with earthly issues, some of which have been consistent from jump street. Redman blazes for the weed tokers in "Smoke Buddah," with its wispy loop of Rick James' "Mary Jane." New Jerusalem is massively represented on cuts like "On Fire" and the Red-produced "Creepin." And let's not forget the third episode of "Soopaman 3," with its surprise ending (you'll definitely bug).

But it's when rallying self-fulfilling causes that Red is most open. Displaying maturity as a producer, he resurrects his political commentator skills from '92 on the police-wary "What U Lookin' 4." The spiritually swaying "Whateva Man" finds the funk doctor flying his smokey flag for the underachiever. Groovable cuts like "Pick It Up" and "Da Bump" syllabically mow down underground perpetrators. And swooping down on champagne-sippin' MCs in "Yesh Yesh Ya'll," Red humorously blasts that he's "Blackin' out wildin'/ Smackin' out weaves, breakin' niggas cheap ass gold chains and medallions."

Simple beat/rhyme frameworks also yield a tour de force when Red trades verses with erstwhile Squad mate K-Solo on the shamelessly banging "It's Like That (My Big Brother)." Even without the radio-accessibility of a hook, the song took off through FM airwaves. His post "How High" duet with Method Man (produced by the Fugees' Pras) may not be so lucky, as the censorship crowd might not take too kindly to Red gems like: "Suck my dick out of animosity/ The velocity will fly that head and freeze yo camps like pottery." But with Red you never know.

As usual, the production wizardry is helmed by Squad elder Erick Sermon, smoothing out the Funkadelic soundscape with swirling keyboards and simmering kicks while maintaining a sinister feel with ominous, thematic bass drones. The sonic approach creates a dance floor-friendly vibe which seems perfectly appropriate for the Funk Dr. Spock's return to dry land, although if Sermon had just pushed a tad more for the variety manifested on *Whut?*, the end result would be perfection. But through all the murky travels, Red can still take what's given to him and aim for higher ground.

MARCUS REEVES

TRU

True 2 Da Game

No Limit/Priority

Production: artist

In the South, traditional aspects of hip-hop culture are embraced by a minority. Instead, they have been replaced by an alternative culture of preferences, which includes mackin', being a playa vs. being a playa hata, ridin' candy and bringin' down the fifth wheel, and smokin' Swishers instead of blunts as an everyday way of life. Hailing from New Orleans, C-Murder, Master P and Silkk The Shocker of TRU (The Real Untouchables) are lyrically adept at describing these Southern phenomena while providing a haunting overview of ghetto life throughout the South.

REDMAN/NINA SCHUTZ, TRU/NO LIMIT RECORDS

5 A HIP-HOP CLASSIC 4.5 SUPERIOR 4 SLAMMIN'—DEFINITE SATISFACTION
3.5 DOPE 3 GOOD, WORTH CHECKING OUT 2.5 AVERAGE 2 NEEDS WORK 1 TOTALLY WACK

True 2 Da Game is a two-disc, 22-song tapestry woven with morbid synthesizers, discomforting lyrics, and a replica of convoluted ambitions articulated by many of the impoverished in New Orleans' numerous ward districts. TRU's game unfolds with the anthem of the Master P-owned No Limit Records, "No Limit Soldiers," a display of TRU's lyrical aptitude over the staccato march drum track backed by old school 808 reverberations. "Feds" is Aaliyah's "If Your Girl Only Knew" turned into bonafied gangsta shit by a swift beat jackin' and slight chorus modification. Still, other songs like "Smokin' Green," "There Dey Go" and "What They Call Us" will be rattlin' in trunks of [Cadil] Lacs "ridin' candy" south of the Mason-Dixon line, and help to round out the first disk nicely.

The consistency does wane on the second disc; however, "Freak Hoes," "Pop Goes My Nine," "It's My Time" (a solo joint displaying Mia X's skills), and "Final Ride" save it from collecting dust by sitting in the case. Though *True 2 Da Game* successfully conveys TRU's unsettling images of the dog-eat-dog New Orleans streets, at times it runs the risk of making TRU sound like the New Orleans chapter of Thug Life because of the Tupac-esque/Thug Life-esque influence on songs like "The Lord Is Testin' Me" and "Heaven 4 A Gangsta."

Although this album will be understood by those who recognize hustlin', it is not recommended for those looking for the crisp, uptempo beats traditionally found in East Coast hip-hop. Nonetheless, it will answer all questions about why Southern, independently owned record labels like No Limit, Suave House and Rap-A-Lot ride *Billboard*'s top 200 album chart, and will be a rude awakening for those who thought New Orleans was only about Mardi Gras, Bourbon Street, gumbo, swamps and bounce music.

MIGUEL BURKE

FRANKIE CUTLASS

Politics & Bullsh*t
Relativity
Producers: artist

In case some of y'all have forgotten that Latinos in general (and Puerto Rocks in particular) are in this hip-hop thing for the duration, Frankie Cutlass, better known for his bangin' remixes and a few underground crowd-pleasers, is here to remind you. No need to re-up on the long-forgotten high school Spanish lessons though, Frankie doesn't use this album as a venue for any Castillian-speaking Rico Suave characters sans skills to get some light. Matter of fact, except for the original and remixed shots of "Boriquas On Da Set," with Bouncemaster Doo-Wop and South Bronx heavyweight Fat Joe, most of the songs on the album are freaked by non-Latinos. With snippets from Al Pacino's cult-classic *Carlito's Way*

serving as intros and intermissions, this compilation of sorts is a combination of solid production and some well (and not so well) established talent.

For example, in what has to be the surprise move of the year, some former members of The Juice Crew—Craig G, Shante, Biz Markie, and Io and behold, none other than the Big Daddy himself!—get together once again to flex their vocal chords on "The Cypher." Although the foursome's lyrics and flows sound a bit strained and/or dated, it is kinda cool, nonetheless, to hear them gettin' some run.

Despite using the same Freddie Jackson sample that's rapidly gaining accolades for a certain foxy female, another phat team-up is "Focus," which features The Lost Boyz and M.O.P. The bugged mixture of the classic, Quiet Storm groove with Cheeks' raspy smoothness and M.O.P.'s adrenaline-pumped vocals results in nothing less than head nods for days. The absolute butter award, however, has to go to the darkly tinted Mobb Deep/Kool G Rap/MOP joint, "Know The Game."

Having to mention Frankie's Puerto Rican heritage is a sign of these fucked up race/ethnicity-infatuated times we live in, but with the lack of exposure that Latinos in hip-hop get, it will hopefully help to dispel the myth that Hispanics are only outside observers and not an integral part of Rap. With a platoon-sized roster full of top choice talent, this latest from a "real live Boriqua" nigga like Cutlass should expand his fan base beyond the NY metro and re-establish Latinos'—including Dominicans, Chicanos and Cubans— positions as true members of the Hip-Hop Nation.

CARLITO RODRIGUEZ

CAMP LO

Uptown Saturday Night
Profile
Production: Ski and Trugoy

One thing you can say about Camp Lo is that the boogie-down Bronx duo of Geechi Suede and Sonny Cheeba have style. With confidence on par with most mic gripping veterans, these new jacks effortlessly spread their lyrics over the mostly intoxicating funk grooves of burgeoning producer Ski with never-let 'em-see-you-sweat-like panache that's hard to resist. As you can gather from the title of their debut album, these young soul brothers are big fans of the '70s blaxploitation film era. Unfortunately, like many of the flicks that hindered the genre, *Uptown Saturday Night* has its fair amount of highlights, but suffers from an influx of material that should have been left on the cutting room floor.

Things start off well enough with a consistent and entertaining first half. "Luchini" is a champagne cork popping tale of the pursuit of riches; "Black Connection," the disc's strongest moment, spotlights inviting strings, while special star cameos also provide much needed assistance and diversity. De La Soul's Trugoy The Dove adds the Native Tongue touch to "B-Side To Hollywood," and Butterfly shines on "Swing," a kinetic duet with the Lo's Geechie Suede, who incidentally sounds strikingly similar to the Digable Planets' leader.

Despite the help of these outside forces, as *Uptown Saturday Night* grows in length, the crew's appeal begins to dwindle with each subsequent musical scene. "Say Word" is a boring, UMC's first album-sounding mishap; "Negro League" is a dreary posse cut gone awry, and "Nicky Barnes" and "Come On" are pure aimless filler. By the time you reach the record's climax, Camp Lo's big willie dreams and references to their cinematic inspirations have already begun to wear thin.

Not fully capturing the potential that they flaunted

on their first single "Coolie High," Camp Lo fall prey to the typical freshman mistakes that new groups suffer trying to find their voice in an overcrowded hip-hop marketplace. For Camp Lo to succeed in future projects, they're gonna need more direction to create the musical masterpieces that Suede and Cheeba are more than capable of.

ELLIOTT WILSON

FRANKIE CUTLASS/DANIEL HASTINGS, CAMP LO/CHRISTIAN LANTRY

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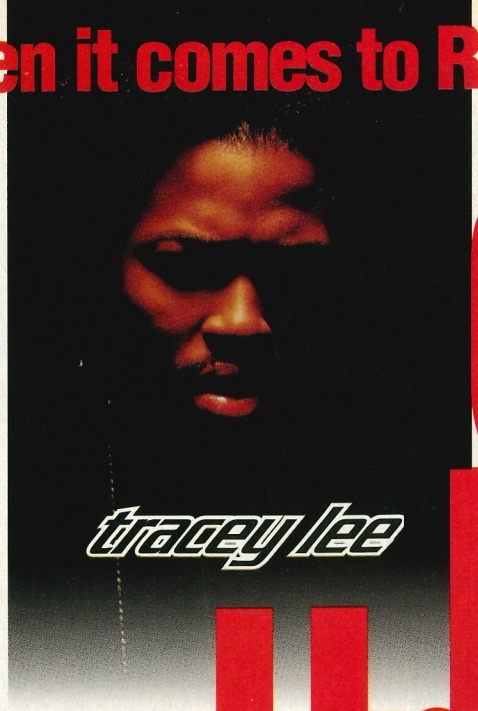

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THE JUGGAKNOTS

The Juggaknots
Fondle'em Records
Production: Buddy Slim

There's no better sound than hearing an emcee or producer come from left field to nudge the creative boundaries of hip-hop (and the end result yields a tight product). With that said, Bronx-duo The Juggaknots, who anchored themselves as tri-state, sub-underground luminaries several years ago, answer that call in leaps and bounds with their self-titled debut. Unfolding their penchant for complex labyrinth flows, mature poetics and emotionally-grounded content, siblings Breezy Bruin and Buddy Slim bring instances of Generation X angst to the ear that are as visually intense as a Scorsese flick.

The duo are set on addressing the stagnant imagination among the current lot of emcees, an agenda manifested in cuts like "Trouble Man," "Jive Talk" and "Epiphany." But the crux of this aural experience is in the Juggaknots' ability to reel out vivid stories of trouble life. "Loosifa" tells of an innately evil brother who, while getting life together as a family man, finds attaining peace difficult with crack flooding his community. Unlike many who sit idle, Loosifa smokes the crackhouse, literally: "buyer or dealer who steal, splattered the latter sparked the backdraft/ From the session many bodies were freed of their (soul) possession." Cautionary kudos aside, it's down right prophetic considering the song pre-dates THE SOURCE's report on Florida's Samuel Mohammed, who committed the same act.

A conversational muse on bigotry is at the center of "Clear Blue Skies," where a Caucasian father tries to dissuade his son from continuing an interracial relationship: "I can't take another minute of you and that heifer son/ Looking sort of like Tom Willis from the Jeffersons." Wrapped in a soft, wistful rimshot/keyboard combo, "Clear Blue Skies" is a delicate contrast from the earth-leveling pound of "I'm Gonna Kill You," a tale any brotha who has walked around with the threat of being attacked by a girl's jealous ex can relate to. The added bonus to these well-developed tales is their unpredictable endings.

Listening may get hypnotic with Buddy's thick, sizzling, jazz-laced production bobbing between the duo's monotone rhyme maze; however, with a sharp ear and a desire for expansive oral fiction, the Juggaknots are enough to keep your mind blown for the long run. So dig in. **SLIP ROC**

SINGLES FILE

"PLAYA LIKE ME & YOU"	DO OR DIE rap-a-lot/noo trybe
"WHAT THEY DO"	THE ROOTS geffen
"WORLD SO CRUEL"	FLESH-N-BONE def jam
"CAN'T NOBODY HOLD ME DOWN"	PUFFY W/MASE bad boy
"THINGS'LL NEVER CHANGE"	E-40 sick wit it/jive
"THAT'S HOW IT IS"	REDMAN def jam
"LET'S RIDE"	RICHIE RICH def jam
"GET HOME"	FOXY BROWN def jam
"HELL ON EARTH"	MOBB DEEP loud
"THUG DEVOTION"	MO THUGS relativity
"YOU COULD BE MY BOO"	THE ALMIGHTY RSO surrender/rap-a-lot
"BEEN THERE, DONE THAT"	DR. DRE aftermath
"LOVE ME FOR FREE"	AKINYELE stress
"CAMAY"	GHOSTFACE razor sharp/epic
"ATLIENS"	OUTKAST la face

SNEAK PREVIEWS

ARTIST	ALBUM TITLE	TENTATIVE RELEASE DATE
CHUBB ROCK	*UNTITLED*	EARLY FEB
DJ MUGGS	*THE SOUL ASSASSINS*	EARLY FEB
WU-TANG	*UNTITLED*	FEB 25
KRS-1	*JUST TO PROVE A POINT*	FEB 25
AZ	*IF NOT WHY NOT*	EARLY MAR
ORGANIZED KONFUSION	*UNTITLED*	EARLY MAR
ARTIFACTS	*THAT'S THEM*	EARLY MAR
RAMPAGE	*UNTITLED*	EARLY MAR
WARREN G	*TAKE A LOOK OVER YOUR SHOULDER*	MAR 11
ALKAHOLIKS	*UNTITLED*	MID MAR
HEAVY D	*WATERBED HEV*	MID MAR
SCARFACE	*THE UNTOUCHABLE*	MAR 25

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DELINQUENTS - YOUNG CELLSKI - C-MURDER - C-BO
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compilations Alternatives & soundtracks

JAMIROQUAI

Travelling Without Moving

The Work Group

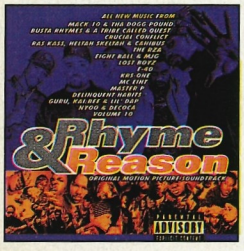
Jason Kay, frontman of Britfunk group Jamiroquai, is a walking contradiction. On one hand, he's the environmentalist, soul-singing son of a jazz vocalist, who has been known to donate portions of his merchandising profits to Greenpeace. On the other, he's a cocky, white, 26-year-old Londoner who spent his initial royalties on a gas-guzzling Aston Martin, and is stuck on sub-seventies funk. Add to the mix a band that has critically updated a tried and tested musical genre and you've got *Travelling Without Moving.*

A formal campaign to "bring back the boogie," *Travelling* is essentially about the metaphysics of having a good time. The group has detoured from the earthy jazz-funk-soul of their 1993 debut, *Emergency On Planet Earth,* and the introspective follow-up, *Return of The Space Cowboy,* for a more predictable, yet sonically diverse, sound. Jamiroquai have a thousand musical tricks up their sleeves: edgy horns laced with jazz intricacies, energetic bass lines and disco rhythms, and a wider variety of tempos than usual in British funk. It all equals funk-lite.

Check "Use The Force," where Kay's mystical lyrics flow over a thumping bass line and an Earth, Wind and Fire-esque brass section. "I must believe I'm a rocket man/ I'm a superstar, I can be anyone/ I can step beyond all boundaries." Or you could try "High Times," with its razor-edged funky guitars. "Drifting Along," a reggae track of the sort The Police use to do, is an easy vibe, while the layered instrumentals of "Didjerma" and "Didjital Vibrations" will have you (or keep you) trippin'.

Most of *Travelling's* 13 tracks are blatantly mainstream, but done with such confidence that you may forgive Jamiroquai's one dimensional musical delivery as they traffic between jazz virtuosity and dance-floor boogie necessity.

KWELI WRIGHT



VARIOUS ARTISTS

Rhyme and Reason soundtrack

Priority

As if the tepid reception to *The Show* wasn't enough of a deterrent, Miramax Studios has officially stepped into the Rapumentary pit. Bumrushing your local theaters in January is *Rhyme and Reason*, a film that promises to give the masses a true inside peep at their favorite mic-controllers. Unlike its aforementioned predecessor, however, this film focuses more on the rappers' day-to-day lifestyles and less on the show bizz aspects of their lives.

Fortunately for the distinguishing rap-consumer who demands his/her money's worth, the film's requisite soundtrack is not some ol' contrived hodge-podge of second-string material that the contributing labels threw in the pot in order to gain some (any!) exposure for said half-assed material. First up to the plate are Mack 10 and Tha Dogg Pound, lacing us with "Nothin' But The Cavi Hit," and once again holdin' fort on the Wessside like only they can. Also on the roster are The RZA and Master P, each with their own brand of darkness for that ass. The Lost Boyz, Heltah Skeltah and Crucial Conflict are on hand to serve up a couple of points, as well. No squad is complete without at least one vet in place to show the rookies how it's really done, and The Teacha, KRS-ONE, is in there droppin' science on the state of hip-hop with "Bring It Back."

Believe it or not, there are just too many outstanding songs on this album. Naming any more would be an injustice to the rest. There really is no defining formula for soundtrack success, unless you count tight quality control, but compilation-king Priority should have no problems with this one. As far as soundtracks go, *Rhyme & Reason* should be in every rap connoisseur's collection.

CARLITO "RICE & BEANS"

PRINCE

Emancipation

NPG/EMI

"For me, Prince can be the new Duke Ellington of our time if he just keeps at it," remarked friend and fellow musical genius Miles Davis, in his memoirs published eight years ago. In the interest of keeping at it, the artist formerly known as Prince has released his twenty-first album. Even previous to his initially bewildering name change, the artist seemed to prioritize musical trendsetting as opposed to crafting hits for Top 40 radio. Following a tepid string of mercy recordings for Warner—*Come*, *Girl 6*, *Chaos and Disorder*—the ex-Prince has returned to re-establish his musical kingdom with *Emancipation*, which serves as an aural epiphany of autonomy.

The artist was always many things to many people—saint and sinner, horny devil and jilted lover. *Emancipation*'s 36 tracks explore all the identities. He displays his patented, chocolate, slow jam groove on the sublime gem "Friend, Lover, Sister, Mother/Wife," then serves up his purple rock by covering Joan Osborne's "One of Us." Dancer Savion Glover and spoken word poet 99 do their thing over the heavenly vamp to funk jam "Joint 2 Joint," and the jazzy bounce of "Courtin' Time" recalls the rockabilly of 1983's "Horny Toad."

Yes, *Emancipation* would have made a more powerful tour de force as a single album. Yes, there is filler, feeble by the artist's standards of excellence (most derisively, "Mr. Happy" and "Get Yo Groove On"). And no, the artist is not poised to wrest control of Black music from Babyface or Puff Daddy. But chart domination hasn't been his mindstate in at least a decade—if you want *1999*, pull it out and listen to it. When viewed as the latest offering from one of the few remaining masters left, one tends to agree with the late Miles Davis: "a great musician has to have the ability to stretch, and Prince can certainly stretch."

MILES MARSHALL LEWIS

AALIYAH

One In A Million

Atlantic

If your magazine only knew... Aaliyah's album ain't that bad. With five or six solid hits, *One In A Million* resides on a different plane than the legion of sophomore attempts that produce only one or two good singles. Indeed, after hearing so many references to Aaliyah's perceived lack of vocal depth, it's a pleasant surprise to learn that it isn't true. To compare Aaliyah to her contemporaries, like Brandy or Monica for instance, is like trying to compare Sade with, say, Anita Baker. It's a question of styles. And while Aaliyah will never be mistaken for Mahalia Jackson, she has a strong, sweet soprano that more than holds its own.

One In A Million is especially on point when it comes to the lyrics. With an assist from one of the music industry's hottest, newest writers—Missy Elliot of the "heee heee heee haaaaw" fame—songs like "If Your Girl Only Knew," "One In a Million," and "4 Page Letter" are certified hits. And while the sonic side of the album will not be mistaken for R. Kelly's work, it manages to maintain its own solid identity.

Now that she's a very grown up (supposedly) seventeen-year-old, Aaliyah is ready to showcase her mature side. Her best songs are those about relationship woes, perhaps because they express that time when young women realize how much "power" they have over men and how fragile that power can be. Teenage girls are grappling with relationship issues in high schools all across America, and Aaliyah is ready to become their spokesperson. "Heartbroken" and "Never Comin' Back" are about being tired of, well, men being tired. And for the woman that is really into her man, give "Never Givin' Up" and "Givin' You More" a listen. This child has definitely come into her own artistically.

SHANELLE REIN

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sure shot singles

WARREN G featuring THA DOGG POUND, HERSHEY & BADASS

"What We Go Through"
Def Jam
Production: artist

It's been a hot minute since last we heard from Long Beach delegate Warren G. After making what seemed an indelible mark on Rap music and creating mad hype about a "Warren G era," the platinum-selling G-man disappeared into the shadows. Needless to say, this left fans and critics alike, wondering whether he was truly deserving of such heavy praise, or just another flash in the pan, one-hit wonder. Well, ponder it no longer because he's back to try and reclaim any props he may have lost in the interim.

This latest venture finds Warren posse'd up with fellow LBC'ers Tha Dogg Pound, and newcomers Hershey and Badass. Interestingly, there's no laid back, cruise-control groove like what signified much of Warren's earlier work. This time around, a deep bassline is accompanied with a couple of piano-lounge riffs and a drum sample from that old "Action" song of years back. Although Warren's voice may sound a bit too much like Snoop's for some heads, he does manage to put his thing down and hold his own with the other rappers on the cut. The spotlight, however, must go to Kurupt, 'cause this kid outshines his cohorts with his verse. All in all, this newest from the G-Funkster may not be reason enough to begin talk of a strong comeback, but for those who fiend for his brand of funk, the wait is finally over.

CARLITO RODRIGUEZ

BIG JAZ

"Waitin'"/"Foundation"
Freeze/Priority
Production: artist

Remember "Hawaiian Sophie?" She (the video) was a heavy rotator during the mid-school days. It was the first appearance of one Big Jaz and a certain Jay-Z. That was '89; but in '97 it'll take more than a chick dancing in a tu-tu to show and prove. But don't sleep on the this veteran producer/mc. He was the mastermind behind last summer's anthem, "Ain't No Nigga," a joint which helped him catapult back to the rap frontlines.

The A-sider is your average radio-friendly girl sings the hook over the sampled old school jam; but the lyrics rescue most of those antics, through his use of tales and decisions created within our ghetto habitats. The B-(for bangin') side contains the posse cut that highlights this 2 song item, "Foundation." It features Sauce Money, Tone Hooker and Jay-Z. Each is lyrically impressive/aggressive in their own way, but the host of the track shines over his invited guests: "Don't know karate, but I kick back like a 45-70/ giving ya niggas hell enabling me to live heavenly/ hit ya faggots with my worse/ still never get the best of me/ don't call me money unless you investing me."

A tight Ohio Players sample gives this cut that ol' funk appeal. Add the extra tight verbals from the pre-mentioned mcees and we've got a bonafied treat for your walkman, cd...whatever. A quick glimpse of this single and you'll be convinced that Big Jaz has definitely caught up with the times and changes of hip-hop.

RIGGS MORALES

CAPONE N' NOREAGA

"T.O.N.Y. (Top Of New York)"
Penalty
Production: Nashiem Myricks

To the uninitiated, Capone N' Noreaga are that other dope-ass duo coming out of the Q borough. Backed by the constant support of their mentor and guiding force, Tragedy, the C N' N crew continue to deliver their brand of street news from an uncompromising, rotten apple perspective.

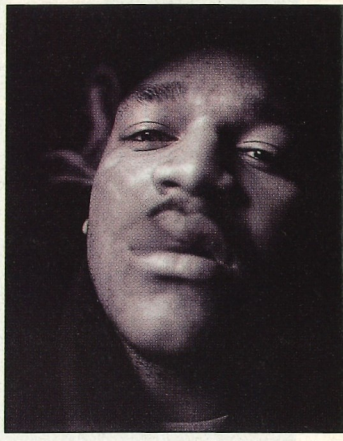
After first garnering attention on the controversial "LA, LA," and then hitting the masses with the double-sided, underground pavement shaker, "Illegal Life"/"Stick You," the Lefrak-Queensbridge Connection are now ready to attack the rap world on a national level. The first offering from their upcoming full-length, *World Report,* is "T.O.N.Y. (Top Of New York)."

Produced by Bad Boy entertainment upstart Nashiem Myricks, this ominous but melodic track fits the two MC's perfectly. While many of you are already enamored by Noreaga's word association style poetics, his raspy-voiced, no-nonsense partner Capone also comes equipped to spray the hip-hop nation. He vividly adds his own fresh perspective on the hustling lifestyle: "I did it for the love of cash, your honor/ Trafficking across the Verrazano, coke dealing, marijuana/ See my persona, glitters in gold/ Unlike them other money getters who stack, turn quitters and fold."

Continuing to establish themselves as one of rap's most promising duos, Capone N' Noreaga are putting together a musical program that you don't want to miss. Stay tuned.

ELLIOTT WILSON

TRAGEDY featuring CAPONE



"Thug Paradise"
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Another headcracker, yo. How many times can the "thug" cow be milked before she keels over from dehydration? Once again, I felt the familiar fire of frustration that sparks up within me whenever I'm confronted with material that's based on an overused (hence abused) concept. However, it has always been my philosophy that an MC should rhyme about whatever it is that gets his or her butter churning, as long as it's flipped iller, and more outrageously than the next cat.

Aiight, aiight, I'll fess up. Although I am kinda tired of all the criminal lore being weaved on tape nowadays, this here groove moves me. Maybe it's because I can relate to this shit. Or maybe it's just the old *Theme from SWAT* break beat that's got me goin'. Whatever the case may be, this latest from yet one more of the Q-borough's skillful is true-grit hardcore hip-hop for that ass. In what seems a veritable 180 degree turn from his Black nationalist, Islam-flavored, "Arrest the President" days, Tragedy teams up with Capone to don the cocaine-tainted, diamond-studded pinky ring of a New York City thug and hits us with a criminal-minded urban youth wish-list at its best. Say what you will about the prevailing outlaw mentality that's got Rap music by the gonads lately, but as long as mu'fuckas can keep finding new ways to say the same shit, some of us die-hard types will keep diggin' it.

CARLITO RODRIGUEZ

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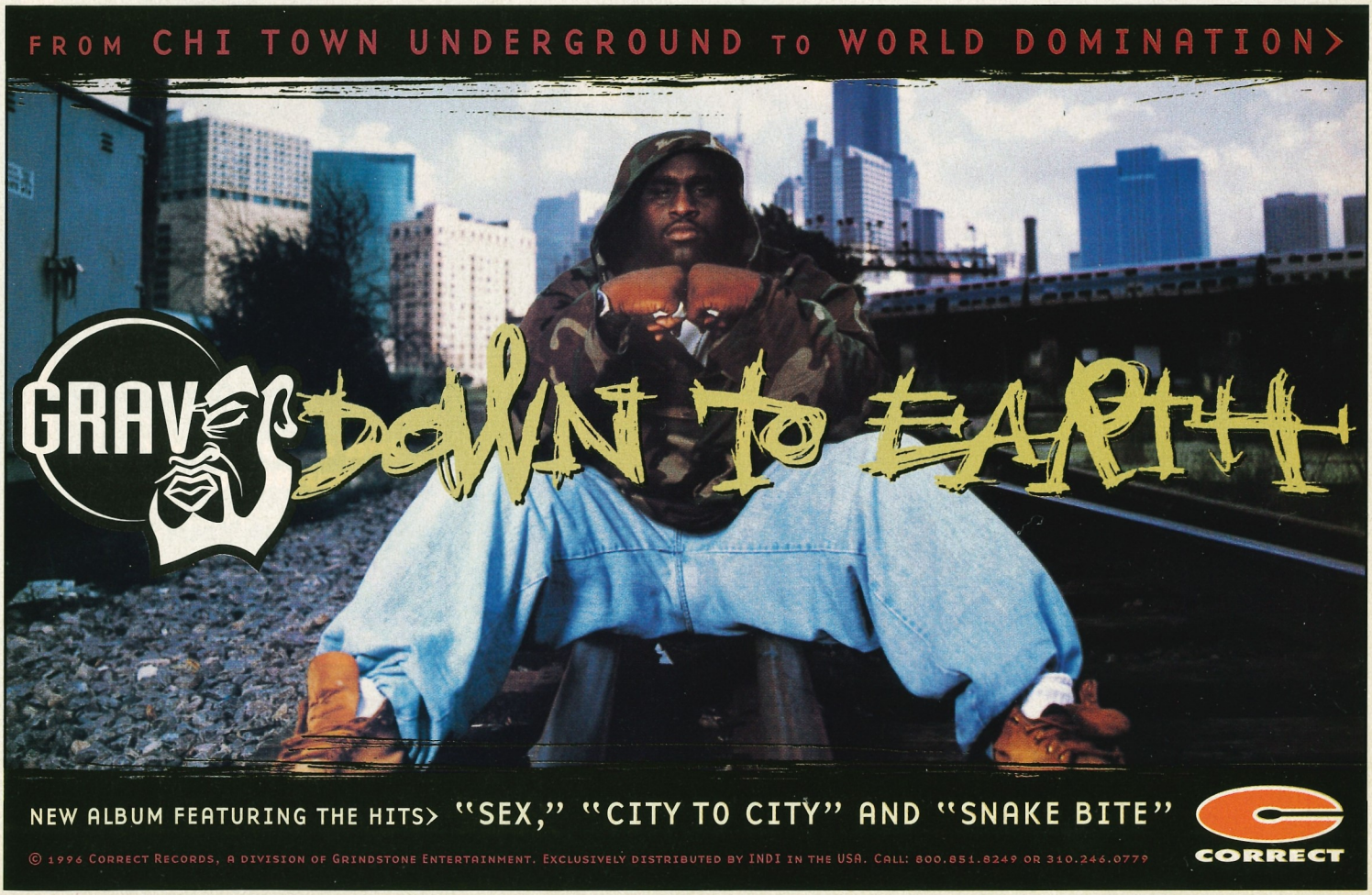
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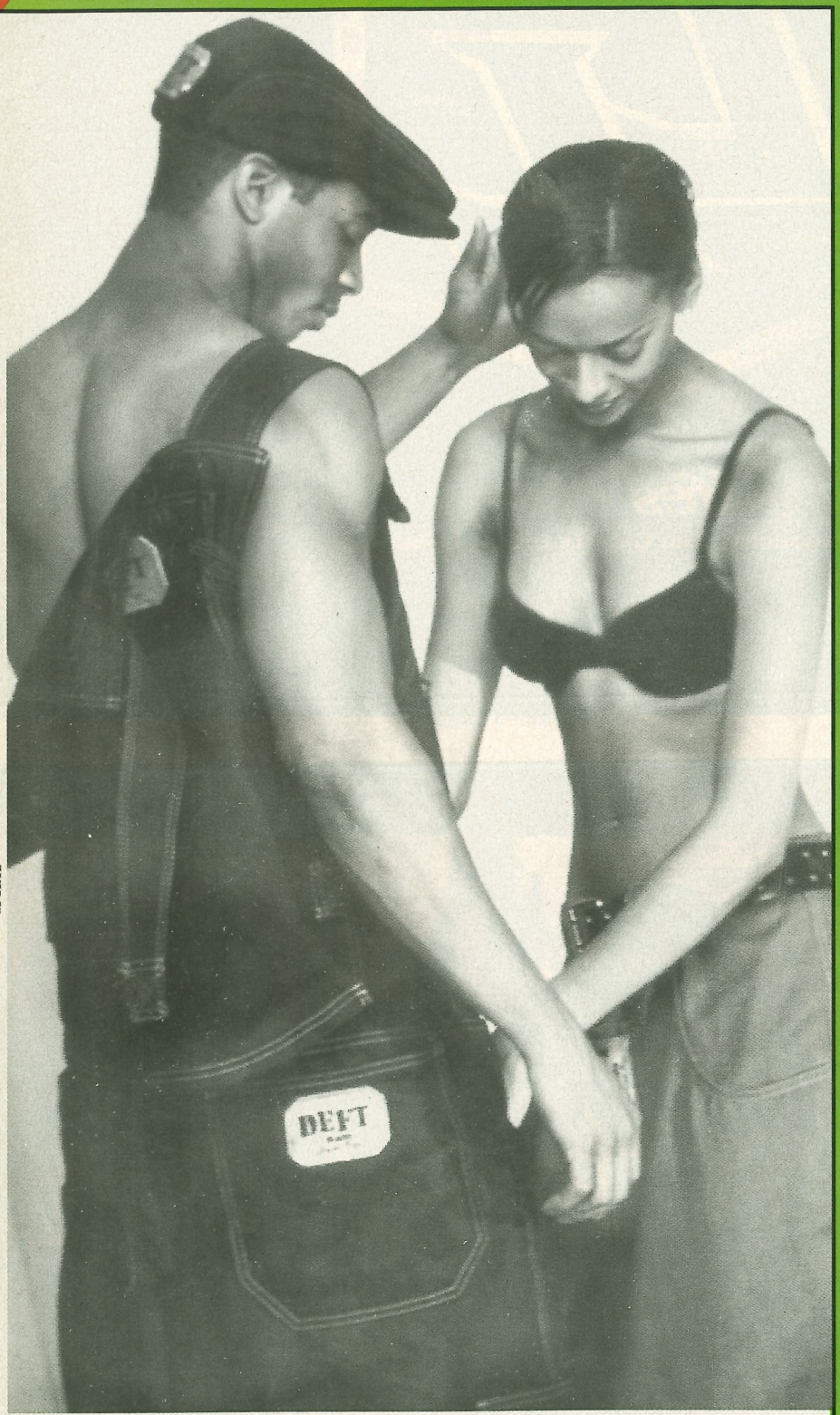

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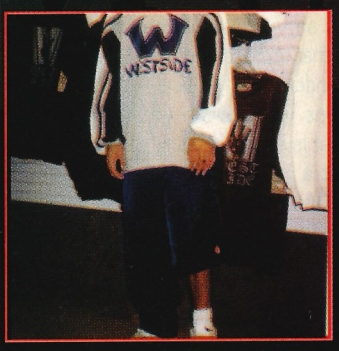

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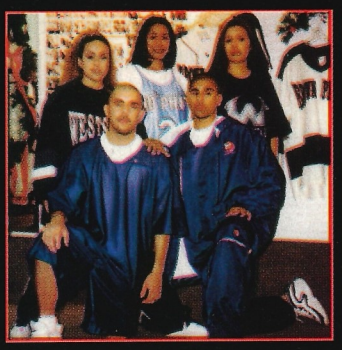

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JUNGLE BROTHERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39

corporate bullshit? If we make a million dollars, we got 10 heads taking a cut out of that money. What does it leave us? Fifteen thousand a piece or some stupid shit like that. I could get that standing outside panhandling.

AFRIKA: We still got a love for music. No matter what, there is always a song inside of me.

If the JB's were to no longer bless the Hip-Hop Nation with music, what do you think would be your legacy?

SAMMY B: They [the JB's] were positive, they never led any kids astray. Their message was always on a positive note.

AFRIKA: When we came to the scene, so many people sprung off of us. The way people dressed changed and it was derived from us. The way people thought changed and that came from us. The dreadlocks, the Timberlands, the safari gear, the whole survival mentality. We focused everybody. It started right back in '88 from the Jungle Brothers.

MIKE G: We brought out the original hip-hop stance, DJ and MC. And we bounced off of each other well, which you don't see a lot now.

What do you think happened to the positive vibe that accompanied that mentality?

AFRIKA: When we came out, things that are the way they are now, were exactly that way then. It's just that it wasn't being promoted and advertised. There were independent labels then that were using whatever money to make records. They weren't making records themselves, jumping on the mic saying this and that, or even putting out artists that represented that. N.W.A basically stole the thunder on a political scale. As artists and musicians you probably wouldn't look [at it] that way. Just in terms of being politically endorsed.

You got a joint out with De La that's bumping now. Is the Native Tongue posse back in effect?

MIKE G: Due to the state that each group's business is in right now, it's really more collaborations. I don't want to say it's not guaranteed, but the timetable will be very sporadic. I think it's a key that you try to show the bright side as well as show the dark side. And us being together should be a bright side. In the beginning, people saw the Native Tongues together. Between that time and now people saw a disbandment. Now they see us back together again. We started together, even if people go different routes, you are always going to end up in the same place at the end.

SAMMY B: The only ones I feel from the Native Tongues is De La. I ain't feeling nobody else except De La.

AFRIKA: Shout out to De La for initiating the reunion.

Now, after over a decade in the hip-hop, relate some things that you've seen and learned.

MIKE G: It's not all about the dollar sign. It's about hooking up with the right people and following up, or else the dollar signs will never come. It's really about the follow up, knowing what to go after and how to go after it. That's what we were lacking before. We had a team behind us that was just like go grab the gold and jet. You see it ain't do us no good. On stage you may have seen 10-15 heads not doing nothing; you don't see that no more. We shook off the dead weight.

ALFRED DAVIS

NEW JACK THING

TELA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 40

out of me. I think music is attitude, no doubt. If one day you're feeling happy and you're feeling like laying in the sunshine, you'll do a happy song. If you're aggravated one day, you're upset about this and that, sometimes you tend to write upset at something. You're upset with your lyrics or you're upset with the track and the groove and you want something that's on the edge with a rah rah feel to it. I can't speak for the next man, but every day I'm not rah rah. There's happy days. I'm happy to be alive, I'm thankful, I'm blessed to be alive, so you know I expose it in my music. Sometimes I get on edge, I'm upset, so I expose that. The music on the album goes through the different phases of myself and my personality.

What about having base in both Memphis and Houston?

It's kind of easy for me to set into the groove with somebody else if they're open minded. Now if they got this one track mind, yeah, it's difficult. But I didn't have those problems coming down here to Houston. Everybody was tryin' to get all the marbles.

SOREN BAKER

YA AREA PLAYA

B-LEGIT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41

camp...outside our area...outside our perimeter. Like one of the guys we're trying to sign right now is Mr. Malik. We're trying to get him and a couple of other cats outside the Bay Area.

Tell me about your relationship and affiliation with Tupac and everything that's been going on surrounding his life and death.

Well, Tupac was my boy, man. I understood him. I knew what he was trying to do. And he was from my area, right? And this guy, he was like a prophet to me. And he was like from everywhere and was just looking for a homebase, basically a family to have his back 'cause he was havin' it hard. When he got with Death Row, he got to do what he really wanted to do, he could go to the studio and work as long as he wanted to. That's why he came up with so many albums. That's why he's still got like so many songs that haven't even been released, because he never had the privilege to just go to the studio and just work.

What do you think about all of the rumors going around suggesting that he faked his death?

That's bogus! Them white folks, (pauses) the way

CONTINUED ON PAGE 94

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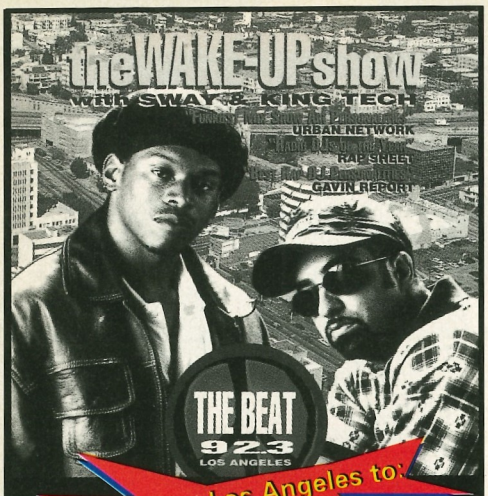

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 92

they was all up in the O.J. shit, you think they gonna let a nigga say he's dead and he really ain't dead? You know they ain't gonna let that happen, man.

What do you think that we will see in the future from the Bay Area? I mean y'all have a lot of success now, like E-40, Too Short, Spice, Luniz, Tupac, etc.

We just try to keep it goin', man. Pretty much the Bay is sewed up right now. Youknowwhatimsayin'? Everything that's gonna come out, everybody whose gonna be large is pretty much out already. But the Bay is here though. We're here to stay.

MIGUEL BURKE

NO ICE, BABY

SNOW

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 42

getting back out of it, it's getting back into some culture with Buju and all them. 'Cause I like culture music much better than I do slacker, so I think it's going in a good direction.

"Informer" was a credible record; listeners were surprised you were white. How did you feel about that kind of respect?

When I came out and "Informer" blew up big, they were kinda like, "oh, a white kid; whatever." But now they see, "okay, this kid, he must not be on a bandwagon." 'Cause you gotta learn the talent. You just can't come over here overnight and learn how to sing this kind of music, reggae music. This kid musta grew up with it and have love for the music. Plus, it got respect over in Jamaica. I'm not doing it for me to please them. I'm doing it for my own self. If I didn't have a record deal, I'd still be doing it. I think they give me respect 'cause I could do it good. I'm not mocking.

There's talk of a movie being done about you and your friends' life as gangsters in Toronto. Tell me about the crew you used to run with.

We were called the Sweamans. It was like nine of us. We all grew up together in the same neighborhood, in the Allenberry Projects. I guess there was something in the water, because everyone who grew in that neighborhood went to jail, has been in jail, drinks, or fights, and that's it. We're all older and we're still together; we're all matured now. I don't know if they looked at me and said, "oh, Darrin's doing good," so now they're doing good. So now, being around them, they're far more grown up.

ADARIO STRANGE

BRONX HIGH LIFE

CAMP LO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 43

this? Why do they choose to be like this, to be different from these hard-rock imitators?

What inspires the weird phrasings like, "I get Krystal Karrington, ice rock-gritty, Carlito-influenced heat flashes, Acapulco homicide scenes?"

GEECHIE: That's us trying to be the flyest MCs. We try to think of something that maybe somebody said, and then make it flier. I try to think of something fly without using the curses.

SONNY: People could say it without the curse, but when my man say things like, "make me eat the pumpkin pie, sea world" (from "Krystal Karrington"), nobody's thinking of stuff like that or approaching it that way. When we write, cursing is the last thing we're thinking about. Messing with your head is our first priority.

When "Coolie High" was released, there were a lot of comments that Geechie's style and voice sounded just like Butterfly from Digable Planets. Since you know heads are quick to yell "biter," how would y'all respond?

SONNY: To squash the talk that cats sound alike, they rocked a song together on the album ("Swing"). It was to show you the difference between the styles and the voices. Geechie rocks more speedy with the lyrics as opposed to Butterfly.

GEECHIE: On top of that, I just have a lot of love for the brother. I always admired what he did as far as Digable Planets. The way he made up the concept, wrote the lyrics, and just went against the grain.

Since Sonny started rapping only two years ago, after putting off electrician school, did you think that would harm the group's "authenticity" on a street level? How would you respond?

SONNY: I don't really know what to say to that. I just have love for this, and when Geechie asked me to rhyme with him, it felt natural. I never thought about that paying dues stuff, because I figured we've paid our dues as far as getting our act together. Some cats did it quicker than others.

GEECHIE: When I was solo, I would look up and feel like I just wasn't going anywhere. But when Sonny came along, my better half, things moved quicker. As far as finding a style and image, it was quicker. Hell, we had 18 songs before the album, and none of them are on there. That's production!

Did y'all feel any pressure putting out the album?

GEECHIE: Being from the Boogie Down, it wasn't any pressure, but we liked to pretend there was pressure to feel that we had to be original. Coming from the Bronx, ain't nothing but original niggas out here. This is the place where it all originated. It was only right for us to take it and do something original with it.

How would y'all comment on the whole issue of reality versus fantasy in rap? There was a time when rappers were just characters that we projected our fantasies on.

GEECHIE: The characters in rap and in real life are different. That's other MCs that get it confused. The shit that they write and the way live, it's confused. These crab niggas do a fly jam and their peeps begin to edge them on to become what they are on record. Real life and imagination are different. I suggest MCs listen to what the fuck they be saying. You have to have the imagination to proceed. Niggas have no imagination nowadays. They'd rather listen to the next man and bite off him.

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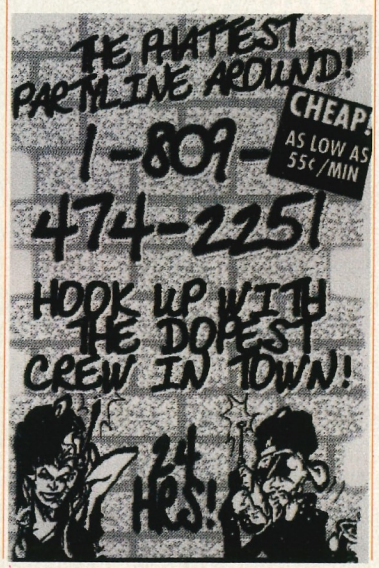

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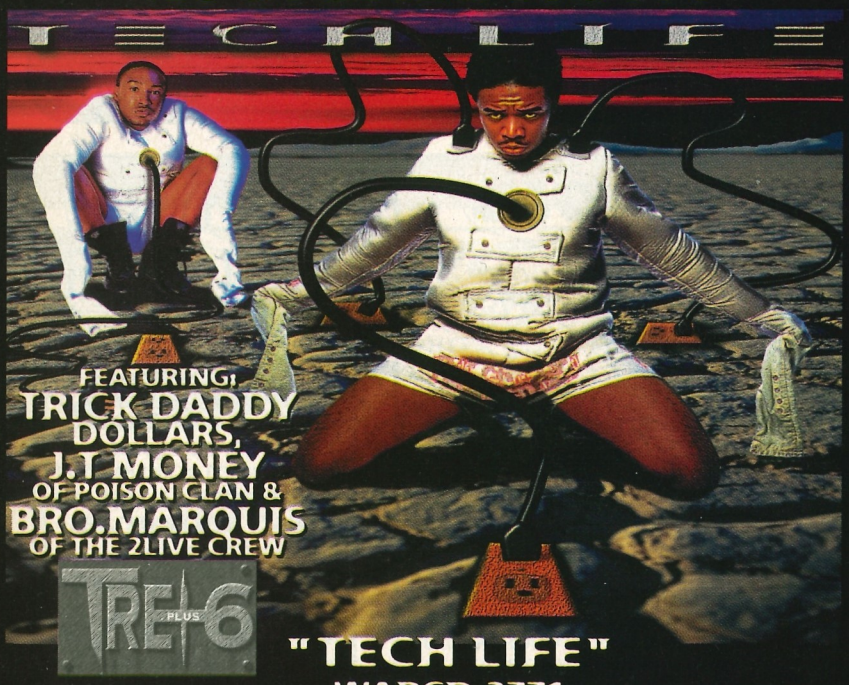

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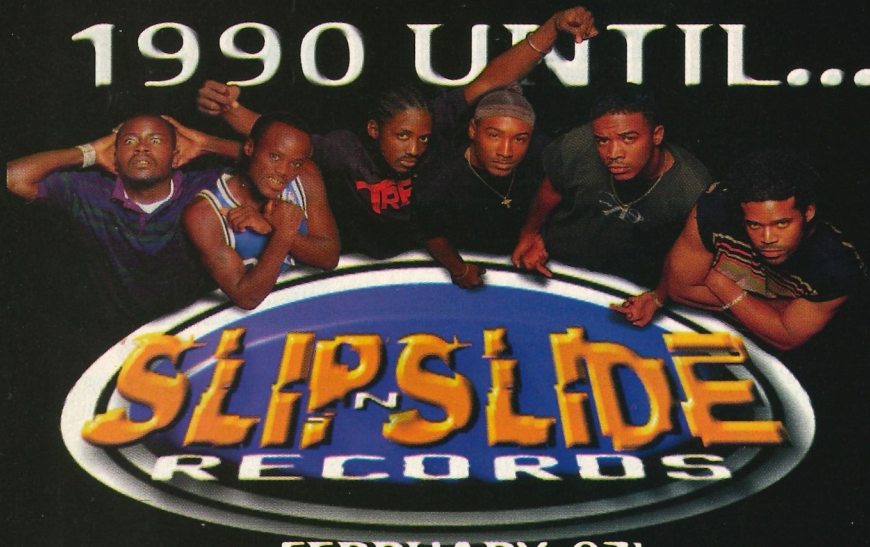

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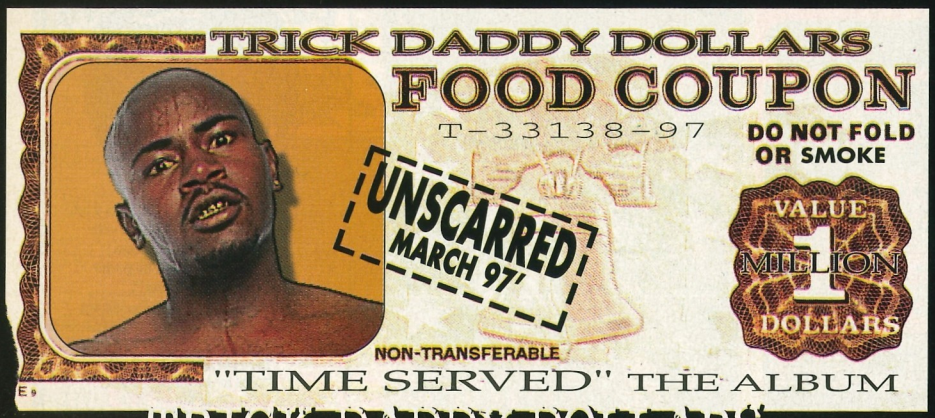

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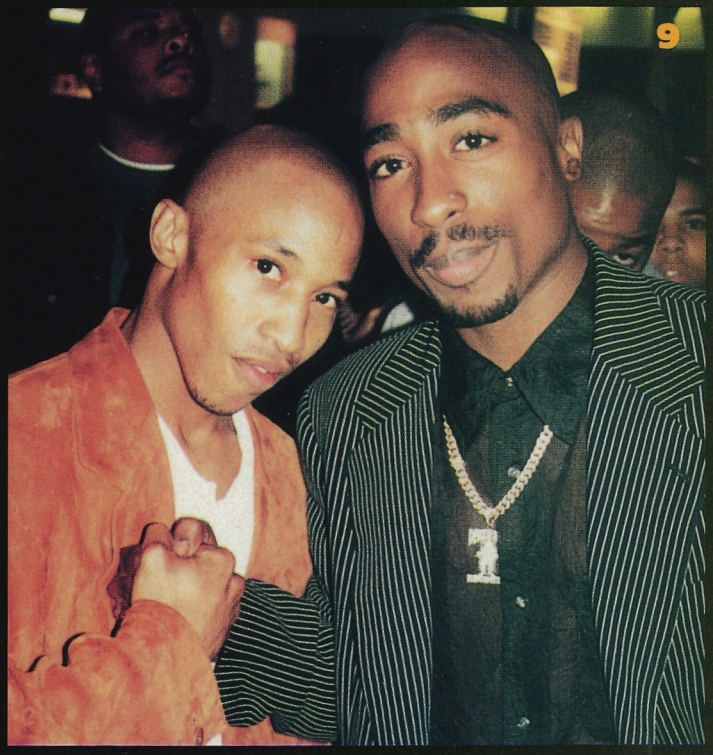
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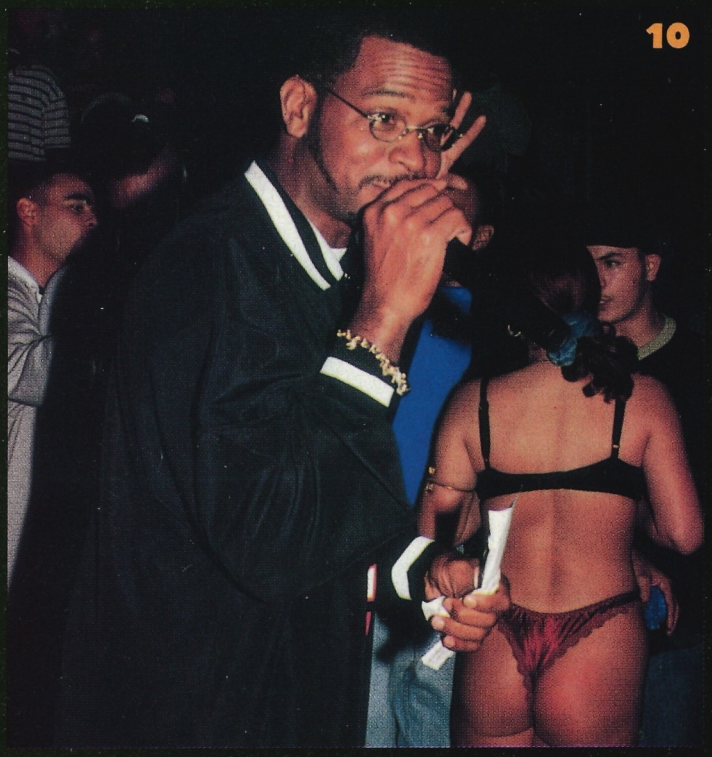
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8. Platinum plus pounds equals Biggie and L.V. representin' the Peace Coast. **9.** Thugs, Hugs & Mugs. **10.** It's Luke! No butts about it. **11.** Gina Thompson and (Hehehehe ouwJ Missy. **12.** Classy like Freddie Blassie are Nas & Puff Daddy. **13.** No, she didn't...oh yes, she did. The Ill Na Na makes a transparent impression on hip-hop.

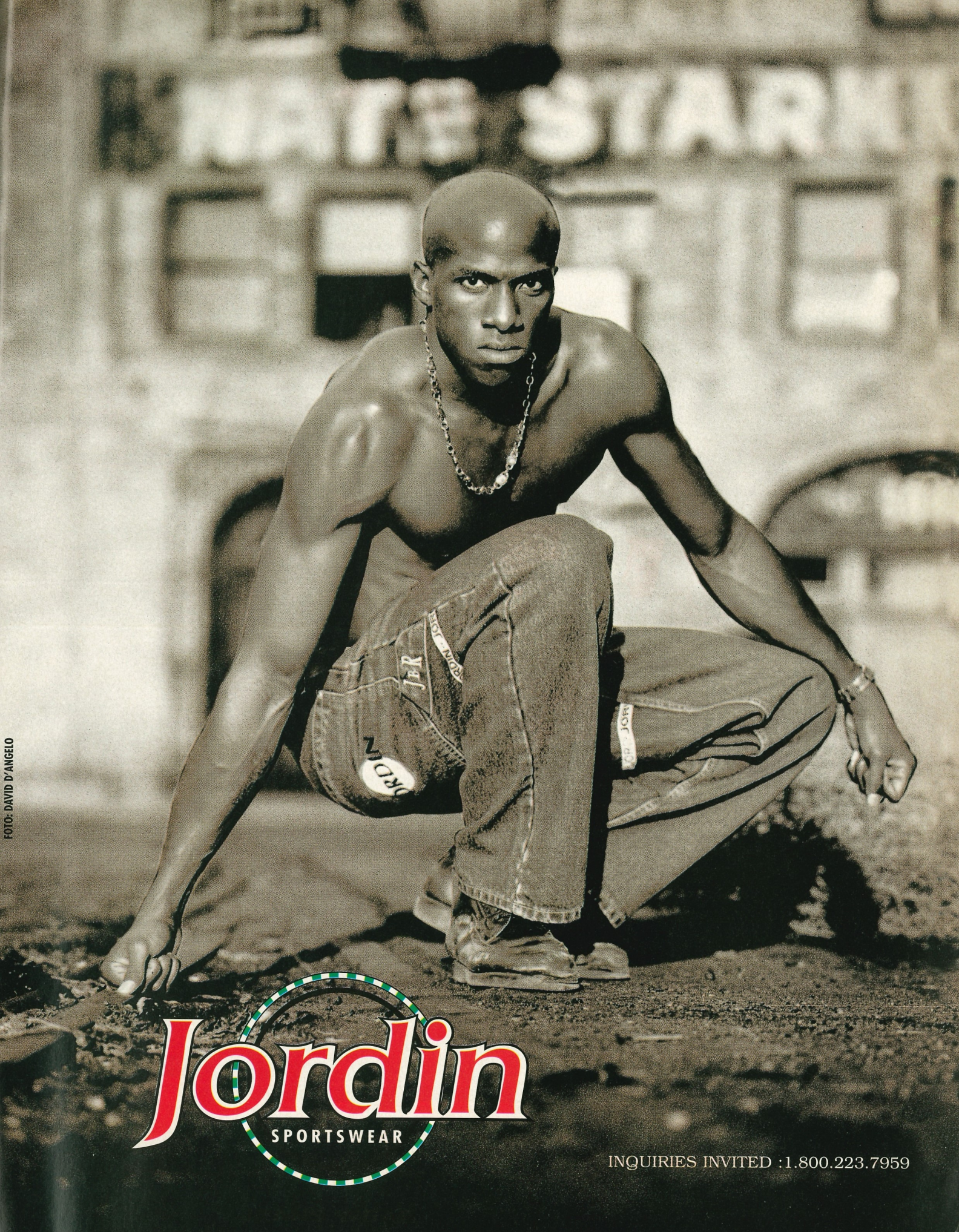


FOTO: DAVID D'ANGELO

reality check

BY BUC WILD

SURF'S UP, DUDE, AND WHICH WAY TO COMPTON? DON'T TRY TO TRIP OR THAT ASS I WILL STOMP IN. TELL DRE IT'S ON AND HERE'S HOW I'M COMING. A POCKET FULL OF EL'S & NO FUNKY DRUMMER DRUMMING.

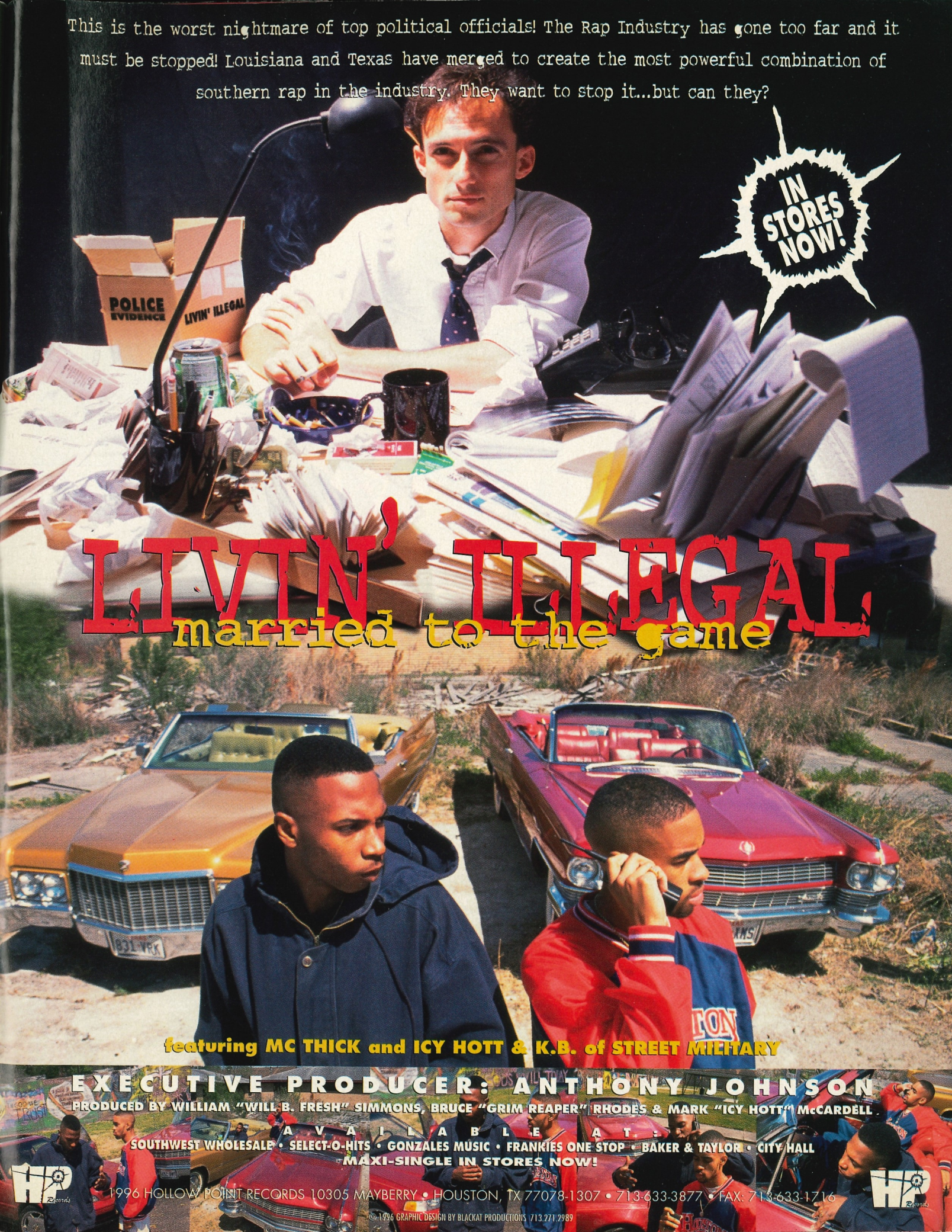
Captain's Log Star Date: 2/1/97. By the time this kite reaches you, the Emperor and myself should be in Los Angeles working on our Reality Check album. We plan to parlay and viciously harass people on the West Coast for about two months. For all those concerned, for the next sixty days please send all fan mail, death threats and soiled panties to Star & Buc Wild c/o PMP Records, 8455 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90048. Although I can't tell you too much about the album just yet, I will say that the following people might want to consider filing lawsuits for what will probably be viewed as slanderous and unwarranted personal attacks on tape: KRS-1, Jermaine Dupri, Grant Hill, The Bush Babees, Monifa, Mike Tyson, Too Short, E-40, Mayor Marion Barry, D'Angelo, Total, Mad Lion, Jada Pinkett, Malik Yoba, and about 35 other randomly chosen targets...Now moving right along, I would like to share with you a short story on one of my favorite topics—peer pressure. This story was inspired by true events that occurred in the summer of '96. All names have been changed to protect those who have escaped the clutches of the law thus far and are scared to death of the RICO statue. As always, I'm a little undecided on the title, so for now let's just call this one, "Excuse Me Sir, But Is That A Medium Size Rigo Sport Jacket You're Wearing?" Saturday morning, 10:05 AM. I'm waiting for my socks to dry in the microwave when suddenly my phone rings. **Buc:** Hello Chin Fow Garden, can I take your order? **Griz (my homeboy)**: Yes sir, good morning, I was wondering if I could order one shrimp roll with extra duck sauce, and two grape sodas? **Buc:** That was one shrimp roll with extra duck sauce, and two grape sodas you said? **Griz:** Yes sir. **Buc:** OK that will be about twenty minutes. **Griz:** That will be fine. **Buc:** No problem, see ya then...Now in case you're a little lost I'll break it down for you. First of all, I only talk in codes on my phone because of the RICO Statue—that's the new law that can implicate you in a crime for being guilty by association. Shrimp roll is a code name for starter pistol. Had he said 'egg roll' then that would have meant he needed the real gat. Extra duck sauce means two box cutters just in case shit gets thick and you have to slash your way out of a jam. Grape soda is a code name for ski mask. Now let's continue. I'm headed to meet Griz with a kid named Shamel that I picked up along the way. Now this kid has been bugging me for about three months about how he wants to hang out with me. I think he's kinda open on the fact that I'm down with The Source, and that I've got a picture of me and Method Man on my wall. Anyway, we meet Griz behind Dr. Jays in downtown Brooklyn. **Buc:** Yo, what up son? **Griz:** What up son, who the fuck is this mark ass looking nigga you got with you? **Buc:** Oh this is my "buddy" Shamel from around the way, and he's down by law. (Buddy and down by law are old school codes that Griz and I use when we're trying to tell one another that this nigga ain't shit to me and if you want to set it on this fool just let me know). **Griz:** Oh yeah, I think I've heard of you kid. What up, fool? **Shamel:** Oh I'm just chillin'...Now that we've all made contact, the plan is to hang out in front of Dr. Jays and wait for someone to come out with some new shit on, and then fall down and fake a spastic seizure. To make a long story short, here's what happened. Some tall kid comes out of the store in a lovely crisp Rigo Sport jacket when all of a sudden I fall down on the ground and proceed to bite my tongue and make loud duck noises. Over comes the chump to see what's wrong and then Griz brings up the rear. **Griz:** Oh my God, he's having a seizure! Someone call EMS quick. Now Shamel's part is to say, "there's no time for that. Let's get him in a cab and get him to a hospital." Griz looks at the chump and says, "in the name of God please help me get this kid in a cab and I'll give you 10 bucks. When we're all in the cab and leaving the crowd behind, I look at the chump and say, "Excuse Me Sir, But Is That A Medium Size Rigo Sport Jacket You're Wearing?" The chump looks puzzled; but before he can respond, Griz puts the shrimp roll to his neck and demands that he slip out of his garment and exit the vehicle. **Griz:** And don't try nothing funny sir or the kid with down syndrome sitting next to you will give you a buck fifty across your grill with his box cutter. The chump was in shock, but I gave him credit because he paused, then asked, "is that a real gat or what?" At first I thought we were gonna have to rumble in the back of the cab with this kid, but all of a sudden Shamel speaks up and tells the chump: "look here son, never mind the little orange piece in the barrel. If you don't run your shit and raise up out of here I'll bite your eyeball out of your fuckin' head." With no more hesitations the chump told the cabby to stop the car so he could get out...Now in case you're wondering what the moral to the story is, I'm sorry to inform you that I don't really think there is one. But for argument sake, let's just say, "Shit ain't always what it seems." As for Shamel, we still haven't let him join the crew yet, but he did show strong initiative that day, so from time to time we do burn a spliff with him. Next month, if permitted, I will bring you the 1997 Crown Heights Glue Sniffing Championships...Big Shouts out to Paul Stewart at PMP, MoJo at LOUD, all kids locked down in the penile, Phat Man Scoop at Hot 97, and everybody on Saint John's and Nostrand.

Peace!!!

P.S. When I get to LA I will be looking for three indo connections and a tour guide to take me to some historical drive-by murder sites, while the emperor's agenda will consist of shopping for Hugo Boss suits and Stetson hats. Keep an eye out for us.

Buc Wild is Co-Publisher of the teen magazine *Around The Way*. You can write to Buc c/o *Around The Way*, 824 St. John's Place, Brooklyn, NY 11216

ILLUSTRATION BY TODD JAMES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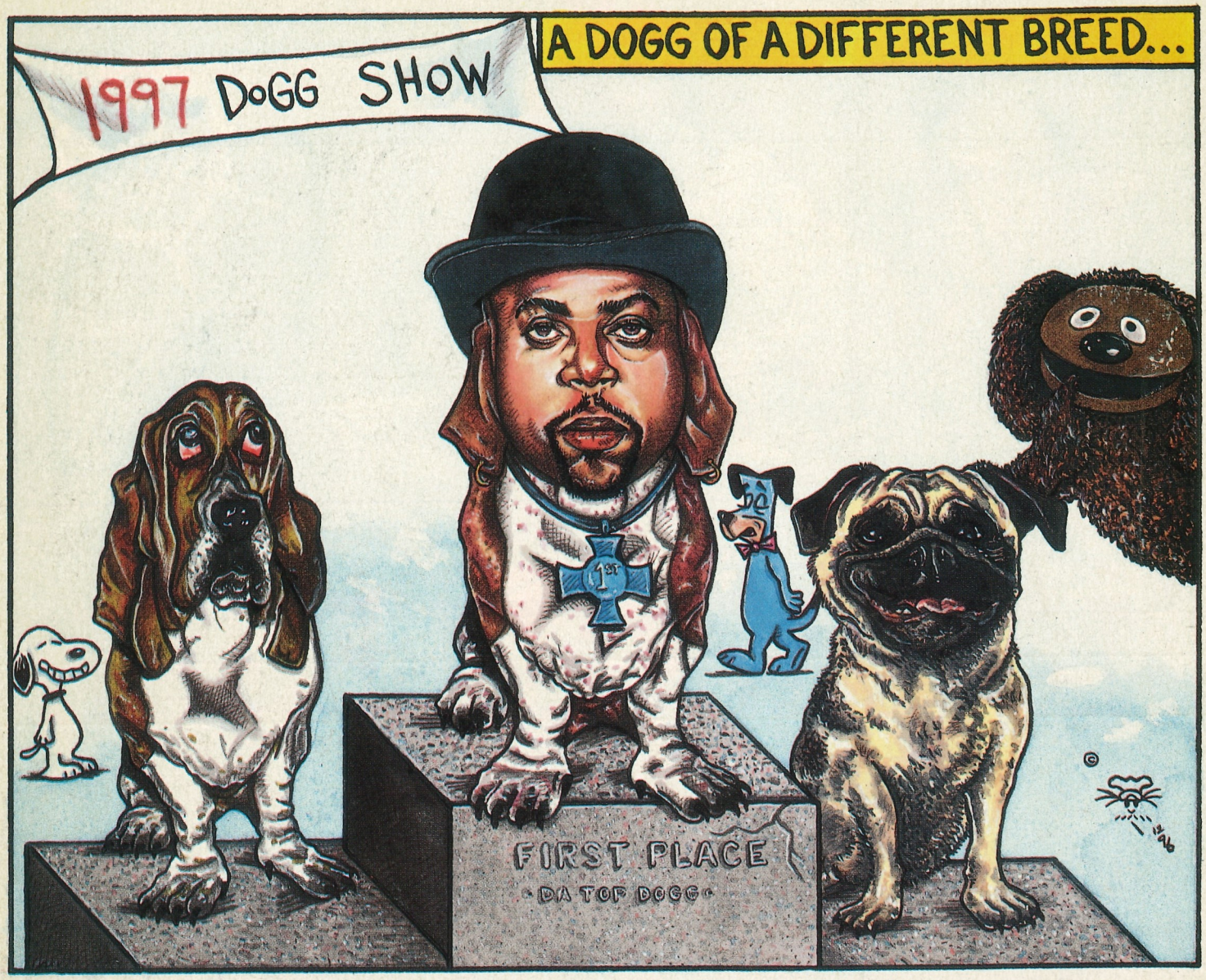
THE LAST WORD

BY ANDRE LEROY DAVIS



COMING AT YOU IN MARCH

KRS-1

You know him as many things: teacher, destroyer of careers, the living embodiment of hip-hop, MC superb, a walking testament to hip-hop's longevity. In March, we'll take you inside the complex world of Kris Parker as he prepares to release yet another opus to a worshipful public.

CHUBB ROCK

Yes, folks. The big man is finally back. Next month we'll catch up with Chubb Rock and find out where he's been, and how the man that was one of the chief party-rockers during the late '80s and early '90s intends to deal with the convoluted beast that hip-hop has become in '97.

SPRING FASHION PREVIEW

Yeah, y'all...it's about that time for the grays and blues of winter to give way to the soul-warming palettes of spring. And *you know* the fashion gurus here at THE SOURCE are cooking up a sneak-peek-feast for your eyes (and wallet). Be here or be square. See ya!

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